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ENGLISH DRAMATIC LITERATURE

WARD

VOL. II.

A HISTORY

OF

ENGLISH DRAMATIC LITERATURE

TO THE DEATH OF QUEEN ANNE

BY

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ENGLISH DRAMATIC LITERATURE

CHAPTER IV.

SHAKSPERE.

(*Continued*).

Biographical data.

THE ensuing biographical sketch is by no means intended as an attempt to review, in however summary a form, what has been written concerning the personal life of Shakspere. It is, on the contrary, intended as an endeavour to detach, so far as may be, the facts which may really have affected that life from accretions and accumulations of all sorts, and from mere traditions of idle or of unaccountable origin [1].

A word may, at the outset, seem in place with regard to

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[1] Among the more important English contributions to the Biography of Shakspere are the life by Halliwell-Phillipps, in vol. i. of his folio edition (1853),—a much fuller version of the life published by him some years earlier (1848),—and the same author's valuable two volumes of illustrations and *excursuses* accompanying *Outlines* (1884; here cited in the sixth edition, 1886), those published by Collier (1843), Dyce (1857), and Grant White (1857), respectively, in vol. i. of their several editions of Shakspere's works, Dr. Furnivall's Introduction to *The Leopold Shakspere* (1877 and 1881), and Mr. Fleay's *Chronicle History of the Life and Work of William Shakespeare* (1886),—the first systematic endeavour at collecting and digesting the evidence that exists with regard to Shakspere's public life,—his career, in other words, as a player and as a writer for the theatre. I have striven to follow Mr. Fleay's example of passing over, where possible, in silence discredited documents. Of biographies of Shakspere by non-English authors, that by the late Karl Elze (1876), and that by Dr. G. Brandes (1896), to which I have already referred, merit special attention. In addition, I have, while keeping in view the traditions handed down by Rowe (whose *Life of Shakespeare* was reprinted in vol. i. of the *Variorum* of 1821), made occasional use of the researches of Malone and Drake among earlier writers, as well as of the labours of Charles Knight (*William Shakspere, a Biography*, 1843), Joseph Hunter (*New Illustrations of the Life, Studies and Writings of Shakspeare*, 1845), Mr. S. Russell French (*Shakspereana Genealogica*, 1869), and other writers.

The spelling of Shakspere's name.

the spelling of the poet's name. If there be good reason to presume that the surname in question was borne by persons of the same lineage only[1], the difference is of a purely orthographical character. Not less than fifty-five various ways of spelling the name are stated to exist, to which *Shakespheare*[2] should perhaps be added as a fifty-sixth. Of these varieties there is sufficient reason to conclude the earliest (1278) to be *Shakespere*. The poet's own signature has been examined in six autographs, among which, however, one is of disputed genuineness[3]. The spelling in this last case is *Shakspere*. Of the three signatures of the will the first, of which the last syllable stands out least clearly, appears to be generally accepted as *Shakspere*; as to the second and third, which are more tremulously written, there is divergence of opinion; but according to my judgment (and one can but follow one's eyes[4]), Malone's final opinion, with which Madden and Boaden agree, is correct, and these two signatures also are to be accepted as *Shakspere*. The same result seems to follow from an examination of the signature to the counterpart of the conveyance of the Blackfriars property in the possession of the Corporation of London, dated 1613. The signature to the mortgage of the same property, dated a day after the conveyance, is unfortunately not extant, except in a facsimile made for Malone, in which the engraver, probably misinterpreting a mark of abbreviation over the last syllable of the name, introduced the letter *a* in place of it. Thus, on the evidence of four at least out of five undoubted signatures it is difficult to arrive at any other conclusion as to the poet's own *usual* signature;

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[1] This was pointed out by Hunter. The owners of the name in old deeds are stated with few exceptions to have the Christian names of John, Thomas, William, or Richard.

[2] The name is so spelt in a MS. prose tract (*The Excellency of the English Tongue*, 1590, already printed in Camden's *Remains*), discovered by Mr. E. J. L. Scott of the British Museum. See some of the varieties in Grant White, *Memoirs*, p. 6, *note*.

[3] Viz., that in the copy of Florio's translation of Montaigne. It was accepted by Sir F. Madden, but doubted by Halliwell-Phillipps.

[4] I judge from the signatures as reproduced in Charles Knight's *Biography*, and in the Boston Public Library volume mentioned below. They are all photo-lithographed in Staunton's *Memorials of Shakespeare* (1864).

while no other evidence can here be safely dealt with[1]. Whether, as has been argued by the eminent grammarian Professor Koch, this spelling likewise best agrees with the historical progress of English orthoëpy and orthography, seems of less importance, inasmuch as varieties in the spelling of the name undoubtedly occurred before the poet's time.

On the other hand, nearly all the quartos bearing the poet's name and published in his lifetime have the spelling *Shakespeare*, with a single exception, which has *Shakspeare*. The editions of his poems put forth by the poet himself have the former spelling, which was also adopted by Heminge and Condell, and after them by the editors of the subsequent folios. That in the London world the first syllable was pronounced long, seems to be proved by the numerous puns on the word *Shake* already noticed. The drafts of the grant of arms[2] of 1596 and 1599 give respectively *Shakespeare* and *Shakespere*; the texts of the conveyance and of the facsimile of the mortgage of 1613 have *Shakespeare*.

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[1] The Boston Public Library possesses a copy of North's *Plutarch* (printed 1603), on a lining-leaf in the binding of which were discovered the words 'Wllm Shakspeare, hundred and twenty poundes.' It is not supposed that the book ever belonged to Shakspere, or that the writing had any connexion with it, but after a very careful examination of writing and book, the librarian arrived at the conclusion that 'the Library autograph presents many reasons in favour of its genuineness, and too few objections to warrant an adverse judgment.' See his valuable report, at the end of *Bulletins, &c., of the Boston Public Library*, vol. viii. (1889).—The title-page of the copy of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in the Bodleian bears the letters *W^{m} Sh^{r}* in a hand resembling the signature to the will. On the back of the fly-leaf opposite the title-page are written the words: 'This little Booke of Ovid was given to me by W. Hall who said it was once Will Shakspares.' See the two photo-lithographs accompanying F. A. Leo's article in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xvi. (1881).—As to 'Shakspere's Bible'—or 'Shakspere's Bibles,' see the letters cited, *ib.* vol. xx (1885), pp. 331-4, from *Notes and Queries*, Series VI, vol. ix. (1884) pp. 487 and 516-7. A 'Shakspere's Bible' was shown to me at Manchester in 1884, containing two 'Shakspere' signatures with the dates 1613 and 1614 respectively. They seemed to me to resemble the disputed autograph in Florio's *Montaigne*, but I thought that dated 1614 the more doubtful of the pair. The library of John Ward, Vicar of Stratford-on-Avon, whose so-called *Diary* (1648–1679) was published in 1839, contained a folio copy of Shakspere, in which was pasted a slip of paper inscribed '*W. Shakspeare*,' thought by the editor of the *Diary*, Dr. Severn, to have been probably a genuine autograph of the poet, obtained by Ward.

[2] The well-known crest is that of a falcon holding, or shaking, a spear.

The form 'Shakspere' vindicated.

I can only arrive at the result that in London the name was pronounced differently from the Stratford usage, and spelt accordingly, but that Shakspere followed the local custom, at least as an ordinary habit. Nothing is more probable than that, like so many of his contemporaries, he should have varied in his own spelling of his own name, but there is no proof of such a fact in his case. As it is therefore to be assumed that he preferred the local usage, according to his wont keeping Warwickshire in mind, I see no reason to defer to the choice of printers, or even to the desire of his brother-poets to find materials in his name for a kindly pun. For this simple reason, and because nothing is ever gained by the adoption of an arbitrary orthography, I have written his name throughout this book as *Shakspere*, herein following the usage of the new English *Shakspere*, rather than that of the old English and the existing German *Shakespeare* Societies. The question is of small importance, and the evidence of handwriting is unluckily not altogether satisfactory—owing largely to the fact that Shakspere's autographs for the most part belong to a period of his life in which he seems to have lost control over his hand. But it seemed fitting to explain why I have preferred to diverge from what must be admitted to be the more usual practice[1].

Necessary restrictions in the ensuing biographical outline.

In seeking to recall what is actually known of Shakspere's personal life, I propose to take no notice of antiquarian details which, whatever their objective interest—and no recovered fact seems to me to lack some such interest either present or contingent—have no patent bearing upon my immediate theme. Details of this description, even though only admitting of a conjectural association with Shakspere's personal life, would not be unsuited to an attempt at illustrating the history of that life as fully as

[1] Among earlier English Shakspere-scholars of more recent date Charles Knight I think alone writes *Shakspere*. For the most recent learning on the subject see K. Elze, *Die Schreibung des Namens Shakespeare*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. v. (1870). His argument, though resulting in an opposite conclusion, has, on the whole, rather confirmed me in my preference. See also Dr. Furnivall's note, Introduction to *The Leopold Shakspere*, p. vii, where the traditional Stratford pronunciation of the name is said to have, within present memory, been 'Sháx-per.'

possible by the innumerable side-lights of time or place; but any such endeavour, however attractive in its conditions, lies outside my province[1]. Apocryphal anecdotes, on the other hand, need not be altogether left unnoticed; for a distinction should be drawn between the gossip which accumulates round every great—or indeed every relatively prominent—name, and the traditions, as they have been excellently defined, of 'the oral history of local affairs imprisoned,' owing to the circumstances of the age, 'in the districts of their occurrence[2].'

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[1] For example. There is really no evidence to connect Shakspere's maternal grandfather, Robert Arden, with the gentle Catholic Warwickshire family of that name, which was borne at the period in question by numerous families in the Midlands (Halliwell-Phillipps, *Outlines*, vol. ii. p. 366). But if any such evidence should be discovered, it would be of the greatest interest as affecting our conception of the early religious impressions which contributed to Shakspere's moral and intellectual growth, and of the personal sentiments with which he regarded such incidents in the history of Warwickshire, and in that of the country at large, as the hanging of Edward Arden of Park Hall at Tyburn in October 1583, and the suicide in prison of another connexion of the house (cf. Froude, *History of England*, vol. xi. pp. 609-11). And even if these Ardens were nothing to Shakspere, or he to their family, these occurrences—and less startling data, such as the placing on the list of the Recusants' Commissioners for Warwickshire in 1592 the name of Mary Arden (*Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, Elisabeth*, 1591-4)—illustrate the significant fact that in Warwickshire religious party-feeling ran very high, and bore its accursed consequences with great promptitude in the reign of Elisabeth as they did in that of her successor. (The Combes of Warwickshire likewise figured among the recusants; and to this family the Thomas Combe to whom Shakspere bequeathed his sword is supposed to have belonged. See the well-known article on 'Hatfield House' in the *Quarterly Review*, January 1876). In the same way, it is of interest that another contemporary Warwickshire gentleman, Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote, in 1585, when William Parry was awaiting his sentence on the charge of plotting the assassination of the Queen, moved in the House of Commons that 'some new law should be devised for Parry's execution, such as might be thought fittest for his extraordinary and horrible treason,'—thus testifying to his desire to be reckoned a member of the extreme and most demonstrative Protestant party. (Cf. Froude, vol. xii. p. 67.) The existence of such extremes in the localities of Shakspere's birth and youth, to which he remained attached to the last, is of course a well-known historical fact; but no additional evidence is on that account superfluous, as giving fresh significance to the fact that religious bigotry—or as far as is perceptible to us, religious partisanship—found no harbourage in Shakspere's mind.

[2] See Halliwell-Phillipps, Preface to *Outlines*, p. xiv. The two species of anecdote, of course, frequently intertwine or overlap—most usually, however, in biographical romance, whose domain one might well wish trodden by none but a master's foot.

Shakspere's father.

The name of Shakspere occurs in Warwickshire in the fourteenth and, more frequently, in the fifteenth century; but there is no evidence to show that any member of the family to which the poet belonged had been connected with the borough of Stratford-on-Avon, previously to his father, John Shakspere, who was certainly settled there by the year 1552. There is a strong probability that this John was brother to a Henry Shakspere who possessed a farm of some importance at Snitterfield, near Stratford-on-Avon; and it is not unlikely that they were the sons of a Richard Shakspere who held land in the same village under a lease from Agnes Arden (a member of the family into which John Shakspere afterwards married) to her brother-in-law Alexander Webbe. Into the disputed question as to the identity and ancestry of Richard Shakspere it would for the present purpose be futile to enter. John, after as is supposed leaving Snitterfield, betook himself to Stratford-on-Avon, where in April 1552—the first occasion when his name stands on record—he was fined for having (like some of his neighbours) failed to remove an accumulated nuisance fronting his dwelling-place. By the year preceding that of his marriage, John Shakspere's success in his trade, which appears to have been that of a glover (a name covering many varieties of venture), had enabled him to purchase two bits of freehold. On one of these, in Henley Street, the Stratford extremity of the eight-mile road coming from Henley-in-Arden, stood the building afterwards reputed to have been the birthplace of his immortal son. In 1557 he married Mary Arden, whose father, Robert Arden, had died in the previous year and had left to her, together with a sum of money, the reversion after her stepmother's (his second wife's) death of a house called Asbies and nearly sixty acres of land at Wilmecote. There is no evidence to show this Robert Arden, who owned in addition a larger property at Wilmecote, to have been of gentle birth or connexions; but his daughter's possessions and prospects at once raised her husband in the social scale as estimated by his fellow-townsmen. He was immediately appointed to a small municipal office, soon afterwards admitted into the corporation as a burgess, and gradually raised to offices of responsibility, culminating in a chamberlainship, an aldermanship, and (in 1568) the high-bailiffship (equivalent to the mayoralty). His prosperity kept pace with his advance in dignities and honour; about 1578, however, there is evidence of his finding himself embarrassed for money—from what cause is not known. But he appears to have been a man of many speculations, and one or more of these may have miscarried even with so good an arithmetician (or accountant) as he appears to have been. In 1585 and the following years he was again in difficulties[1]; and although some little time before 1596 application was made (unsuccessfully) in his name at the Heralds' College for the grant of a coat-of-arms, it is very probable that this application is to be explained by the rising fortunes of his son. John Shakspere died in 1601. For the rest, he was not able to write his name. That he was no Puritan may be gathered from the circumstance of the year of his bailiffship having been the first in which theatrical entertainments are known to have been allowed at Stratford[2].

His mother, brothers and sister.

Of Shakspere's mother, who survived her husband for seven years, we know nothing, except that she bore him ten children (if this computation be admitted as correct). Among these William Shakspere was the eldest son, and for more than two years the only surviving child of his parents, the two girls previously born to them having died in infancy. Of his younger brothers, Gilbert, born in 1566, is known to have been educated at the Stratford Free School, and to have afterwards followed the trade of a haberdasher in London, but to have kept up a connexion with his native town like his brother, and to have in 1602 been entrusted by the latter with the completion of a legal transaction there. Of their brother Richard we know virtually nothing; of their brother Edmund only the fact (on which no romance has I believe yet been built) that he was buried at St. Saviour's, Southwark, in 1607, and is described in the register as a player. His sister Joan, married to William Hart, would on the evidence of her brother's will seem to have been held in affectionate regard by him to the last. So far as I know, no serious attempt has been made to trace in the above *data*, which no further facts of significance are at hand to supplement, the hereditary element which cannot but have contributed to Shakspere's genius.

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[1] The Recusants' Commissioners for Warwickshire in 1592 mention among those who had been presented for not attending church, but were thought to have absented themselves for fear of process of debt, Mr. John Shackspere, Wm. Fluellen and George Bardolfe (*Calendar of State Papers, Dom. Ser., Elisabeth*, 1591-2, p. 290).

[2] See Halliwell-Phillipps, *Outlines*, pp. 37 *seqq*. The Queen's and the Earl of Worcester's players performed at Stratford some time between Michaelmas 1568 and the same date in 1569.

Date of his baptism (April 26, 1564).

William Shakspere was baptised at Stratford on April 26, 1564; the day of his birth, said to have been the 23rd of the same month, is purely traditional, and has no doubt met with popular acceptance partly because his death occurred on the same day of the same month, and partly because of the coincidence with the feast of the national—and fondly supposed historical—saint, St. George.

Probable conclusions as to his school-days and training.

Concerning Shakspere's infancy, childhood and early youth we know nothing—or virtually nothing[1]. During the whole of this period his father's prosperity continued to advance, so that if no star danced at his birth, the sun shone upon his upgrowing. When his schooling began, if in the ordinary sense of the term it ever began at all, is unknown; but wherever the High Bailiff's son was to be found on the occasion of the dramatic performances at Stratford mentioned above, it was certainly not at school. The supposition that at some time in his boyhood—possibly from his eighth year onwards, the usual period of entry at the school at a later period—he was a pupil of the Free Grammar School at Stratford, has in its favour a local tradition reported to Rowe by Betterton. It derives a stronger support from the inherent improbability of his having been left without schooling, and the difficulty of even conjecturing him to have received it elsewhere. The question as to the Latin—and Greek—which he possessed or did not possess, is of a totally different nature, and to be solved by the help of a quite different kind of evidence. If he was a pupil of Stratford school, he was probably set to learn quite as much Latin as would suffice to create in him a taste for more; while of Greek there is no reason to suppose that he was at school taught even the rudiments.

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[1] An immemorial tradition supposes him to have been born in the house in Henley Street purchased by his father in 1556. The plague which visited Stratford in the year of his birth may or may not have come near that building, with or without the aid of adjacent nuisances.

A common-sense view of this subject appears quite sufficient to lead to a natural and satisfactory conclusion, and to do away with any necessity for discussing the still vexed question as to Shakspere's classical attainments. The remark of Ben Jonson, constantly quoted and often perversely interpreted,—

> 'Though thou hadst small Latine and lesse Greeke[1]'—

implies, not that Shakspere had never learnt either of these languages, but that his writings offer no evidence of his having possessed more than what Ben Jonson judged to be a mere smattering of them, or of his having made any pretension to a more substantial kind of knowledge. Shakspere, we are told, could not have been a classical scholar,—he could not have even had a classical training, or he would not have read Plutarch in a translation. In the first place, however, he might, as Dyce well puts it, even if possessed of competent scholarship, be excused for having preferred the use of a translation to that of the original; and again, supposing him to have been unable to read the latter, how many of the laity educated in our own day at grammar-schools and colleges in later life so much as pretend to a greater degree of familiarity with the text-books of their youthful studies, unless they have continued to pursue these for special reasons? Shakspere, it is clear, retained through life at least as much knowledge of Latin as is ordinarily retained by those who have in their youth learnt something of that tongue as a matter of course, but who have not afterwards made it a special study. What he acquired of knowledge of Latin and of Greek authors—or at least of one Greek author—was, like what he acquired of French and Italian, possibly even of German, most assuredly (unless an exception is to be allowed in the case of Ovid) not the result of his school education. It was the product partly of the wonderful assimilative power that was proper to his natural genius, partly of the fact that in his desire to go forth and conquer he was still, like most of the Elisabethans, a child of the Renascence[1].

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[1] Halliwell-Phillipps notes that W. Towers, in his commendatory verses to Cartwright's *Comedies* in 1657, changes the words to 'little Latin and no Greek.'

We may then assume Shakspere to have been a pupil of the Stratford Grammar School during a portion at least of his boyhood, but need not strain after possible allusions to his school-days in the works he wrote as a man[1]. The resources of his parental home cannot, from the nature of the case, be imagined to have in any way supplemented the instruction received by him at school; even the familiarity with the Bible, which is so noticeable in his writings[2], cannot in his case be with much probability dated from the age of life at which it would have been most easily acquired. So much speculation has been devoted to the question of what Shakspere as a boy read or left unread, that the fields and meadows which beckoned him among them are almost forgotten. At times, too, more exciting diversions must have attracted his curiosity and may have absorbed his imagination; we know that after players had been allowed to perform at Stratford in 1569, the year of his father's High Bailiffship, various companies visited the town in 1573 and 1576, and in several subsequent years; and we may fairly suppose him to have been allowed an occasional journey to the neighbouring Coventry, of whose mysteries—or at all events of figures familiar to them—remembrances not devoid of a personal savour will without difficulty be traced in his dramatic writings. A more hazardous, though not in itself unlikely supposition, which has been amply expanded into fictitious narrative treatment, is the notion that the boy Shakspere was present as a spectator at the splendid entertainments given to Queen Elisabeth at Kenilworth by Leicester in 1575[3].

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[1] See three papers by the late Professor T. S. Baynes, entitled 'What Shakespeare learnt at School,' in *Fraser's Magazine* (vols. xx. and xxi.) for November 1879, and for January and May 1880. Prof. Baynes, while avowing a sort of sympathy with the opinion expressed in the first edition of this book, that the 'question as to Shakspere's classical attainments is in reality not worth discussing,' gives an account of the *curriculum* of studies which may be concluded to have been pursued at Stratford School, based upon the works of the (more or less contemporary) educational reformers Brinsley and Hoole, and suggestive of an intellectual training more varied in its nature than is usually supposed to have fallen to Shakspere's lot. He shows that Shakspere may have read Seneca at school, and devotes a long and interesting disquisition to the argument that Ovid, the most dramatic of Roman poets, became a favourite author of his. As to the classical ingredients in Shakspere's writings see, besides Dean Farrar's early Essay, G. Stapfer, *Shakespeare et l'Antiquité*; vol. i. *L'Antiquité Grecque et Latine dans les œuvres de Shakespeare* (Paris, 1878); Delius, *Klassische Reminiscenzen in Shakespeare's Dramen*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xviii. (1883); and specially as to his study of Plutarch, Archbishop Trench's *Plutarch, Five Lectures* (2nd edn., 1874), and R. Sigismund, *Übereinstimmendes in Shakespeare und Plutarch*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xviii. (1883).—For the rest, so far as supposed reminiscences of Greek poetical thoughts are concerned, we are unlikely to forget Gibbon's note in chap. xxvii. of *The Decline and Fall*, where, after pointing out a resemblance between a passage in a poem by St. Gregory Nazianzen and Helena's touching complaint to the 'injurious Hermia' in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (act iii. sc. 2), he continues: 'Shakspeare had never read the poems of Gregory Nazianzen; he was ignorant of the Greek language; but his mother-tongue, the language of nature, is the same in Cappadocia and in Britain.'—I have called Shakspere 'a child of the Renascence,' and there are in truth few influences appertaining to that protracted and complex movement by which he remained untouched. See, *inter alia*, W. König, *Über die Entlehnungen Shakespeares, insbesondere aus Rabelais und einigen italienischen Dramatikern*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. ix. (1874); Sir W. H. Bailey, *Shakespeare and Montaigne* (Manchester, 1895); W. König, *Shakespeare und Giordano Bruno*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xi. (1876), and R. Beyersdorff, *Giordano Bruno und Shakespeare*, *ib.*, vol. xxvi. (1891). The last-named essay opens with some apt remarks as to the general character of Shakspere's education or culture.

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[1] According to a tradition (probable enough) preserved by Rowe, the elder Shakspere was forced by his pecuniary troubles to remove his son from school at an early age.—Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps thought a sly notice of Shakspere's schoolmaster possibly traceable in the description of Malvolio in *Twelfth Night* as most villainously cross-gartered 'like a pedant that keeps school i' the church,' because the chapel of the guild at Stratford was (probably, however, only temporarily) used as a school. He also thought that the examination of *William* Page (*The Merry Wives of Windsor*, act iv. sc. 1), conducted according to a well-known contemporary school-book, rather temptingly suggested a personal reminiscence!

[2] See Bishop Charles Wordsworth, *On Shakespeare's Knowledge and Use of the Bible* (1864).—Mr. Swinburne, if I remember rightly, has dwelt specially on Shakspere's familiarity with the *Book of Psalms*.

[3] Cf. vol. i. p. 155, and see below as to the supposed reference in a passage

Speculations as to his occupation after the close of his school-days.

From a period of Shakspere's life easily to be filled with the help of more or less allowable conjecture, we pass to one in which the imaginative ingenuity of biographers (and of dabblers in biography) finds a free field for its bewildering license. Here it is, to begin with, assumed—on what grounds I do not know, except on the strength of the tradition handed down by Rowe and of the general probability that the eldest son of an impoverished man was not allowed to run idle—that Shakspere, on leaving school, engaged in some regular occupation. Inasmuch as nothing is more likely than that he was associated in some way with his father's business, and inasmuch as the latter, at all events in the days of his prosperity, in addition to his main trade in gloves and other woollen goods, very probably bought and killed, and possibly bred, the animals that furnished the staple of his industry,— we have, ready to hand for marking him therewith, the 'sign of a profession,' or of several occupations rolled into one. Of a technicality of the wool-stapler's industry a direct reminiscence has accordingly been found in a famous passage in *Hamlet*[1]. Aubrey is responsible for the anecdote that he occasionally 'killed a calf' in the way of business. And in the farms where his father bred his sheep, as well as in those belonging to his uncle Henry, or other of his kinsfold, he gained the experience of a 'practical farmer,' of which his works are held to furnish proofs in such abundance[2]. We tread even more dubious ground in

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of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (act ii. sc. 1) to the Kenilworth pageantry. Even assuming this allusion to be indisputable, it was well pointed out by Collier that there is no necessity for explaining Shakspere's knowledge of details as a personal reminiscence, inasmuch as a full account of the Kenilworth entertainments was published by Gascoigne in 1576, in addition to Robert Laneham's letters descriptive of them printed in the previous year. The theory according to which Shakspere attended at Kenilworth in the time of his 'kinsman' Edward Arden, who discovered Leicester's secret marriage and thus brought about his own death, involves a whole series of baseless assumptions.

[1] Dr. Farmer brought home to the ordinary practice of the making of wool-skewers, the origin of the term *rough-hew* in the sentence (act v. sc. 2),

'There's a divinity which shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.'

[2] See Roach Smith, *Rural Life of Shakspere, as illustrated by his Works* (1870).

dealing with other hypotheses as to his occupation during the years of his later boyhood and adolescence. Aubrey, who had heard so much, had heard among other things that Shakspere 'understood Latine pretty well; for he had been in his yonger yeares a Scholemaster in the Countrey[1].' On the other hand, the knowledge of the forms of the law exhibited in his works have suggested the conclusion that he was bound apprentice to a lawyer[2]. Yet, again, he must at some time have obtained the knowledge of surgery which his works reveal,—and was not this the most likely time, and why should he not have taken the usual course[3]? And if Shakspere was ever a soldier—to which conclusion there is so much that points—were not the earliest years of his manhood the likeliest season in which he would have undergone the hardships of military service[4]?

His marriage (1582).

Certain it is that, whether or in what way soever Shakspere, when near the threshold of manhood, was seeking to procure the means of supporting life, he adopted the surest method of increasing the difficulties of his endeavour by entering at the early age of eighteen (*i.e.* towards the close of the year 1582) into what was unmistakeably a rash marriage. This, however, is proved by the general, not by the special, circumstances of the case. That the marriage was celebrated not at Stratford itself, but in some other parish, probably belonging to the same diocese;—that a bond was entered into on the occasion by two inhabitants of Stratford, with a view to avoiding more than a single publication of the bans;—above all that the birth of the young couple's first child took place at a date which is in order only on the supposition that a pre-contract or handfasting, implying a customary right of cohabitation, between the parties had preceded by some months the actual marriage, of which the date was November or December 1582;—all these are circumstances admitting of explanations which sufficiently meet the requirements of contemporary law or usage[1]. I have called the marriage rash, considering that epithet to be applicable to any union contracted between a boy of eighteen (whether or not a royal prince) and a woman of twenty-five or twenty-six[2]. Anne Hathaway was, according to the information obtained by Rowe, the daughter of 'a substantial yeoman in the neighbourhood of Stratford'; and there is nothing to be added to this statement, except that she was very probably a native of the hamlet of Shottery in Stratford parish, though her parentage and consequently the place of her birth and of her abode before marriage remain uncertain[1].

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[1] MS. in Ashmolean Museum, cited in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xvi. (1881), p. 368 *note*.

[2] The late Lord Campbell's *Shakespeare's Legal Acquirements Considered* (1859), attracted some attention; the supposition that Shakspere spent some time in an attorney's office was favourably regarded by Collier, to whom Lord Campbell's argument was addressed. See his *Life*, p. lxxxiv.—Cf. F. F. Heard, *The Legal Acquirements of William Shakespeare* (Boston, 1865), and *Shakspeare as a Lawyer* (*ib.*, 1885).—His knowledge of jurisprudence is treated (with reference to *The Merchant of Venice* and *Measure for Measure*) by F. Freund in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xxviii. (1893).

[3] His works are stated to have been subjected to a medico-chirurgical commentary by W. Wadd in the *Quarterly Journal of Science of the Royal Institution* (1829). There is some humour in a remark with which I remember to have met, that *Titus Andronicus*, supposing it to have been Shakspere's earliest play, savours as much of the profession of which he had so lately been a member as Schiller's *Robbers* (written when its author was actually a military surgeon). The question of the authorship of Parts ii. and iii. of *Henry VI* has likewise been complicated by speculations on the origin of the 'farmyard' allusions.

[4] W. J. Thoms, *Was Shakespeare ever a Soldier?* All these and other similar investigations were amusingly brought together by the late Mr. Blades in his *Shakspere and Topography*, already cited, where he humorously added yet another hypothesis of his own. Cf. also some of French's *Appendices*. Grant White, *Memoir*, p. 45 *note*, amuses himself with a humorous demonstration that Shakspere was once a tailor. But he seems seriously to incline to the belief that he was apprenticed to the law. (See pp. 67–77.)

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[1] The detailed proofs of this assertion need not be repeated here. The force attached by custom to a pre-contract of the kind in question is illustrated by passages in *Measure for Measure*, *Twelfth Night*, and other of Shakspere's works.—In 1872 and for some time afterwards, a curious picture which professed to be a contemporary representation of Shakspere's handfasting was in the possession of Mr. John Malam, who published an account of it under the title *The Shakespere Marriage Picture* (1873); I do not know what has now become of it.—The late Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps made the striking suggestion (which of course involves a second hypothesis of greater importance) that Shakspere's nuptials were celebrated some time before the date of the legal marriage under the illegal forms of the Church of Rome, and that the marriage under the forms of the Establishment followed merely in order to satisfy family feeling.

[2] That such was Anne Hathaway's age at the time of her marriage appears from her epitaph in Stratford Church.—Collier, supported by the opinion of Coleridge, considers a personal reference traceable in the passage in *Twelfth Night* (act ii. sc. 4):

'Let still the woman take
An elder than herself,' &c.

See also Grant White. *u. s.*, p. 53.

Relations between Shakspere and his wife.

How far Shakspere's marriage was productive of happiness, or of the reverse,—or whether, as one may feel inclined to think, it virtually resulted in a union of mere acquiescence, —is pure matter of speculation. Nothing is known of Shakspere's wooing; nothing, except the dates of the births of their children, as to their mutual relations in the earlier period of their wedded life[2]. The ingenious suppositions as to the Puritanising tendencies of Mrs. Shakspere in her later years, although favoured by certain indications which need not be altogether overlooked, fall within the domain of imaginative biography[3]. It is, in any case, well known that towards the close of his life he was not desirous of taking the opportunity of drawing up his will in order to give expression to any feelings of exceptional warmth towards her. He bequeathed to her his second-best bed,—her dower being as a matter of course secured to her by law. She died seven years after her husband and, according to a tradition communicated by the clerk of Stratford church in 1693, desired (as did his daughters, who have been credited with notions similar to those attributed to herself on religious subjects) to be laid in the same grave with him.

His children.

Three children were the issue of this marriage, of whom the eldest, Susanna, was born in May 1583[4]. The two younger, twins, were baptised, under the names of Hamnet and Judith, at Stratford on February 2, 1585. Susanna in

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[1] 'Anne Hathaway's cottage' at Shottery is part of the farm-house that was inhabited by Richard Hathaway in 1581. The structure appears to have been altered and re-divided even since Garrick purchased relics appertaining to it, but can never have been, architecturally speaking, a cottage at all.—A Richard Hathaway (otherwise unidentified) is mentioned as a dramatist contemporary with Shakspere.

[2] Gerald Massey, in his enquiry into the *Sonnets* (1866, 2nd edn. 1872), interprets *The Lover's Complaint* as referring to Shakspere's courtship, and to the early troubles between himself and his wife.

[3] Cf. Elze, pp. 562-3, and Brandes (German translation), p. 975.

[4] See above, p. 14.

1607 married a physician of the name of Hall[1]; and her last descendant died in 1669. Hamnet (or, as the name was sometimes spelt, Hamlet) died in his boyhood, in 1596[2]. Judith, who in 1616 married one Thomas Quiney, died in 1661; the last of her children in 1638, without issue. No descendants of the poet can accordingly have been in existence since 1661; though representatives of the line of his only married sister Joan Hart were lately, or still are, living[3].

His departure from Stratford.

When and why Shakspere quitted his native town for London cannot be stated with any approach to certainty. Inasmuch as he can hardly be supposed to have returned to Stratford shortly after he had quitted it, his departure is unlikely to have taken place before the middle of 1584,—for his children Hamnet and Judith were born early in the following year. Everybody knows the tradition, to which a great English writer[4] has given enduring literary form, and of which Rowe's version is that three or four years after his union with Anne Hathaway Shakspere had 'fallen into idle company, and amongst them, some, that made a frequent practice of deer-stealing, engag'd him with them more than

The deer-stealing story.

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[1] Her epitaph has given rise to a strange conclusion as to Shakspere's reputation in his native town, which I do not notice, as I agree with Dyce that it is quite unwarranted by the evidence in question.

[2] Allusions to this child have been sought in several of Shakspere's plays, as well as in the name of the tragedy of *Hamlet*—obviously a pure coincidence—viz. in the character of Arthur in *King John*, in that of Edward Prince of Wales in *Richard III*, in that of Prince Mamillius in the *Winter's Tale*, and in other plays. Collier notes that there was an actor of the name of Hamnet in one of the London companies at a subsequent date, who (like many of the players) may have come from Warwickshire. Hamnet and Judith Shakspere were doubtless named after their father's friends Hamnet (or Hamlet) and his wife Judith Sadler. See French, *u. s.*, p. 378, where many instances are given of the use of Hamlet as a baptismal appellation down to the seventeenth century.—Judith Shakspere is the heroine of a romance by Mr. William Black (1884), which contains some brilliant passages, but is not perhaps on the whole felicitously conceived.

[3] See French, *u. s.*, p. 383 *seqq.*

[4] Walter Savage Landor, in his *Citation and Examination of William Shakespeare, &c., touching Deer-Stealing, &c.* (1834), afterwards included in the *Imaginary Conversations*. Charles Lamb's criticism of the *Examination* was, that only two men could have written the book—he who wrote it, and the man it was written on. See Forster's biography of Landor (*Works and Life*, vol. i. 1870, p. 354).

once in robbing a park that belong'd to Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecot, near Stratford;—for this was he prosecuted by that gentleman, as he thought, somewhat too severely, and, in order to revenge that ill-usage, he made a ballad upon him; and though this, probably the first essay of his poetry, be lost, yet it is said to have been so very bitter that it redoubled the prosecution against him to that degree, that he was oblig'd to leave his family and business in Warwickshire for some time, and shelter himself in London.' The evidence on the subject of this long-lived legend is, however, nugatory[1]. The descendants of Sir Thomas Lucy own a park at Charlecote with deer in it, although grave doubt has been thrown on the existence in his own day of any park near the mansion rebuilt by him 'in the shape of a royal E'; a stanza of a ballad attributed to Shakspere is preserved which contains some ribaldry against Sir Thomas Lucy; and apart from other possible allusions, the well-known passage in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* pokes most indubitable fun at the Lucy coat-of-arms[2].

The story, whatever its worth, is not irreconcileable with a hypothesis resting on a firmer basis of fact. In 1587 a company of players whom the Earl of Leicester had taken with him to the Low Countries on his pompous appearance there, at the close of the year 1585, as the representative of Queen Elisabeth's tardy intervention, found itself at home again in anticipation of the Governor's final recall, to be so speedily followed by his death[1]. In 1586 the plague visited London, and the travelling company, whose numbers had perhaps been increased in consequence, on its return to England, instead of settling in a London theatre, performed in a series of country towns. Among these it was not likely to pretermit Stratford, where Lord Leicester's earlier company (dissolved in 1583) had appeared as early as 1576; and we actually find that they performed there in 1587. Inasmuch as after Leicester's death in 1588, a theatrical company was formed in London under Lord Strange's patronage by Edward Alleyn, which included several of the actors who had followed Leicester abroad and with which Shakspere was certainly connected in 1592, and in all probability during the previous two or three years, the conclusion is not easy to resist that this was the bridge whereby he passed from the country surroundings of his youth into London life[2]. At the same time, it is noticeable that no early tradition suggests that Shakspere quitted his native town 'with histrionic intention.' Possibly he may have left Stratford with the actors, although he had not as yet by any kind of understanding become one of them. This supposition would, again, tally with the well-known legend, apparently traceable in its origin to Sir William D'Avenant, that at the beginning of his London life Shakspere turned an honest penny by holding the horses of persons alighting on their visits to the theatre, and in course of time hired underlings to wait upon such customers as 'Shakspere's boys[1].' The anecdote, it must be said, gains no additional colour of probability from the fact that 'the Theatre' in Shoreditch (where Lord Strange's company did not act, but where Shakspere might have found occasional irregular employment) was in these years carried on by James Burbage, who is also stated to have kept a livery-stable close by in Smithfield; for his Warwickshire origin is almost as doubtful as is the training at Stratford Grammar School of his son Richard[2].

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[1] It was buoyed up by the second-hand statement of Oldys, that he had seen or heard of an old gentleman (who died in 1730) to whom the story was known on the authority of some old folk at Stratford.

[2] Act i. sc. 1. The aid given by Sir Thomas Lucy, as justice of the peace, to Leicester in the proceedings which led to the execution of Edward Arden in 1583, was both officious and effective; but this must be left aside until Shakspere's connexion through his wife with Edward Arden's branch of the family can be proved. See an interesting article by Miss C. C. Stopes in the *Athenæum*, July 13, 1895, where it is shown that Lucy's Puritanism, of which too much has been made, 'was of the type of that of the Vicar of Bray.'—As to the absurd notion that Shakspere was the author of (Stafford's) *Examination of Complaints*, printed as 'by W. S.,' founded on a supposed reference to the pardon received by him for the deer-stealing, see *Forewords*, p. viii, in *New Shakspere Society's Publications*, Series vi. (1876).

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[1] The company included among others a certain 'Will,' designated as a 'jesting player.' The conclusion that this was Shakspere naturally suggested itself to hasty minds, encouraged by the additional circumstances that a John Arden and a Thomas Ardern accompanied Leicester. See, however, Bruce, *Who was Will, &c.*, in (Old) *Shakespeare Society's Papers*, vol. i. A special temptation to indulge in the above-mentioned interpretation lay in the fact that the company in question passed from the Netherlands to Denmark, having been recommended by Leicester to King Frederick II,—on which occasion (had he been of the party) Shakspere might have played a part in the old Town-hall at Elsinore. But there can be no reasonable doubt that 'jesting Will' was William Kempe, whose early and enduring association with Shakspere constitutes one of the most notable facts in his unwritten —and unwriteable—biography.

[2] Cf. Fleay, *Life of Shakespeare*, pp. 8-9, and *History of the Stage*, pp. 82-4.

The truth, however, remains that the meagre series of fragments, which supply the only authentic materials we possess for re-shaping to ourselves the outlines of Shakspere's life, is interrupted by a gap reaching from 1585, or thereabouts, to 1592, though towards the further limit this gap may be held to have been in a sense diminished by lawful conjecture. Its earlier portion can however confessedly only be filled up with the aid of tradition—or of its often self-willed ally, imagination. Mainly within these years Shakspere has accordingly been made to toil or travel in various ways and in divers lands; for there is no need of distinguishing very accurately between these combinative efforts and those which include earlier years of his life. As to Shakspere's travels, then, the evidence appears to me to resemble very closely in kind that concerning his experience of particular trades or professions,—or at least the conjectures on both heads seem to rest on much the same sort of basis[3]. What remains alone indisputable as to the interval of time in question, is that in these years Shakspere led a more or less unsettled life. We cannot be wrong in concluding that these were the years in which books as well as men first offered themselves in a richer and wider variety to his observation and study, and again that, whatever the spirit in which he met the multitude of new experiences, it was not one of unrestrained curiosity or of reckless self-indulgence. The particular profession which, either at the beginning or in the course of this period, he actually adopted implied a restless life, and was held in low public esteem; too frequently, indeed, it was full of disorder and licence. But when the name of Shakspere emerges again out of obscurity, though we first meet with it on the page of an embittered assailant, no breath of personal scandal falls upon it either directly or by insinuation.

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[1] Halliwell-Phillipps, *Outlines*, pp. 70–1.

[2] As to the Blackfriars theatre, with which James Burbage was from the first connected, nothing need be said here except that it was a house converted to the purposes of a private theatre between the years 1596 and 1598. Shakspere and Richard Burbage cannot be shown to have been members of the same theatrical company before 1594. (See Mr. S. Lee's article on 'Richard Burbage' in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. vii. (1886) p. 286.)

[3] The question as to Shakspere's conjectural travels was first fully discussed by Elze in *Jahrbuch*, vol. vii. (1873), and he of course returned to it in his Biography. He held the supposition that Shakspere had visited Italy to be reasonable, but thought, as already Charles Knight had supposed, that the visit took place as late as 1593. See also Brandes' very candid statement of the case, pp. 156 *seqq.* (German translation).—The supposition of a journey to Scotland, which Elze inclines to reject, belongs to a different

Shakspere as an actor.

When Shakspere first became a player is unknown; but it must have been some time before in 1592 Greene gibed at his popularity, and before in the following year (1593) Chettle praised him as excellent in the 'qualitie' he professed—a term which, as has been already pointed out [1], ordinarily refers to the practice of the actor's art. Mr. Fleay may be held to have demonstrated the probability of Shakspere having, during some years before 1592, been included in the company known as Lord Strange's and directed for a time by Edward Alleyn; whose usual place of performance in London was the Cross-Keys. In 1592 a reconstitution, very possibly an amalgamation, of companies took place on the occasion of the opening of the Rose theatre by Alleyn's father-in-law Henslowe [2], and

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category of conjectures.—Perhaps I may notice that a French writer of talent, M. Léon A. Daudet, has recently, in *Le Voyage de Shakespeare* (1895), attempted to paint. something in the manner of the German Romanticists, a poetic picture of the developement of Shakspere's imaginative genius by means of a supposed series of travels in the Low Countries, Lower Germany, and Denmark in or about the year 1585. The author at least soars beyond the sphere of those writers whose ingenuity in finding chapter and verse leaves so trifling a balance to the credit of Shakspere's own imaginative powers.

[1] *Ante*, vol. i. p. 492, *note*.

[2] Lord Strange's company, or a company of players virtually identical with it, appears to have travelled during parts of the years 1592, 1593, and 1594, when the plague was in London. Among other places it visited Bath,

it was in this year that Shakspere was subjected to jealous censure by reason of his acting in plays, whether or not retouched by himself, written by Greene and some of his associates, doubtless for a different company. There is no evidence that his histrionic reputation, which had thus early received recognition, ever rose exceptionally high. He is, to be sure, mentioned as one of the 'principal Tragœdians' who acted in Jonson's *Sejanus*, and again as one of the 'principal Comœdians' who performed in the same author's *Every Man in his Humour*. As to his appearances in plays of his own writing or revising, the obvious deduction has been made from the often-quoted attack on him by Greene, that he took the part of Richard Duke of York in the *Second* and *Third Parts* of *Henry VI*[1]. The statement that he acted the Ghost in *Hamlet* rests on the authority of Rowe; but since Rowe doubtless had it from Betterton, we may here assume a trustworthy theatrical tradition. On the other hand, no credit need be attached to the legend that a brother, or according to another account a cousin[2], of Shakspere saw him perform in London a character easily to be identified with old Adam in *As You Like it*. Near the close of Shakspere's theatrical life, John Davies of Hereford spoke of him as playing 'kingly parts in sport[3].' The familiar assumption that he was a mediocre, if not not indeed a bad, actor, is quite unwarranted. A tradition to the contrary endured till 1680, when Aubrey asserted that he 'did act exceedingly well'; while the statements of the

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a modern historian of whose theatre describes it as having held, during the Elisabethan epoch, a position 'very nearly, if not quite, as distinctive as that which it enjoyed a couple of centuries later.' See Belville S. Penley, *The Bath Stage*.

[1] See H. Kurz, *Shakspeare, der Schauspieler*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. vi. (1871).

[2] Oldys says, a brother. If, as is stated, this brother lived into the reign of Charles II, old Adam himself might have envied his longevity.

[3] In *The Scourge of Folly* (1611 *c.*).—One of these 'kingly parts'—of course at the other end of Shakspere's theatrical career—is supposed to have been that of Edward I in Peele's Chronicle History, because in sc. 3 Queen Elinor says to Balliol, after his proclamation as King of Scotland:

> 'Shake thy spears, in honour of his name,
> Under whose royalty thou wear'st the same.'

(See Fleay's *Life of Shakespeare*, p. 14.)

author of the *Historia Histrionica* (1699) that he 'was a much better poet than player,' and of Rowe (1709) that he distinguished himself 'if not as an extraordinary actor, yet as an excellent author,' will, although undeniable in themselves, hardly be held to affect his histrionic fame. In any case, there remains the immortal scene in *Hamlet* to prove that, while acutely aware of the difficulties and the pitfalls of the contemporary conditions of the actor's profession, he had at the same time mastered the real principles of the art; and this sufficiently accounts for the vitalising influence of his experience as an actor upon his work as a dramatist.

His beginnings as a dramatic writer.

Of far greater significance is the question as to the beginnings of Shakspere's activity as a writer for the stage. The evidence as to the chronological order of his plays I shall attempt to review below; and the uncertainty as to the dates of the earlier among them will then become sufficiently apparent. It is difficult to believe otherwise than that he began with re-touchings and adaptations of existing plays before he passed on to independent composition, and this agrees with such external indications as have been thought perceptible of his earliest activity as a dramatist [1]. From 1592 onwards these indications became more numerous and striking, and whether or not it be possible to prove that the opening of Henslowe's new theatre directly affected the group of writers among whom Marlowe's genius towered highest, although Greene was most demonstrative as their controversial champion, there can be no doubt that Shakspere's activity as a dramatist was then entering into a new phase, and one which commanded a wider public attention. I have already hinted at my opinion that this growing popularity of the playwright intensified the bitterness of Greene's notorious attack upon Shakspere's appropriations as an actor[1]. In any case, this may safely be regarded as the period in which Shakspere as a writer was subject to the influence of Marlowe in a degree and measure approached by that of no other contemporary. If so, there can be nothing rash in concluding Shakspere during the same period to have also for the first time become intent upon the treatment of tragic (or, in the more special sense of the epithet) historic themes, whether as an adapter or as an original dramatist, or as standing midway between the two characters. That he had some concern in certain plays produced in 1592 on such themes—whatever may have been their precise relation to certain other plays afterwards ascribed to him by editors of the First Folio edition of his works—it would be idle to deny[2].

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[1] See especially Fleay's *Life of Shakespeare*, pp. 9 *seqq.* Mr. Fleay concludes Shakspere to have actively engaged in 1589, 1590, and 1591, as at least part author of the plays acted by Lord Strange's men, under the personal influence, first of Robert Wilson, and then of Peele. Among the plays in which he had a hand in this period, Mr. Fleay thinks there should be included the first versions of *Love's Labour's Lost* (cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 466, *note*) and *Love's Labour's Won*, and Shakspere's first version of *Romeo and Juliet*. The remark is noticeable in this connexion, that 'there is not a play of Shakspere's that can be referred, even on the rashest conjecture, to a date anterior to 1594, which does not bear the plainest internal evidence to its having been refashioned at a later time.'

Shakspere's occupation in 1592.

In whatever measure Shakspere's endeavours had, in or before the year 1592, advanced the fortunes of the company with which he was associated, they must have come to a temporary stop by the visitation of the plague, which led to the closing of all the London theatres during the latter half of that year and the whole of its successor[3]. Shakspere, as I have already noted, is during this interval sent to Italy by some of his biographers. Nothing could have better corresponded to certain features in his subsequent works, or would probably have been more agreeable to himself. It is, however, at least as likely that he remained in England, possibly travelling in the country with his theatrical associates for a livelihood[4], and employing such additional leisure as may have been at his command in preparing for publication poems which he may have for some time previously had by him, although it would be absurd to interpret literally the declaration that the earliest-printed of them was 'the first heir of his invention[1].' *Venus and Adonis* appeared in the spring of 1593[2], and having completely caught the fancy of the public for which it must primarily have been intended—including the 'divers of worship' referred to in Chettle's apology—reached a second edition in the following year (1594), when *The Rape of Lucrece* was also published. Few will now be found to believe that either *Venus and Adonis* or its successor had been composed by Shakspere before he left his native town. We may agree with Coleridge[3] that *Venus and Adonis* signally exemplifies 'that affectionate love of nature and natural objects without which no man could have observed so steadily, or painted so truly and passionately, the very minutest beauties of the external world'; but this loving observation of wood and field was not shaken off by the poet when he quitted Warwickshire. And since another criticism of Coleridge's[4] is equally just, that 'the perfect sweetness of the versification' of the same poem 'is its first and most obvious excellence,' the supposition becomes untenable of a boyish author in his country-home catching, as it were by inspiration, the influence of models which in this poem are both imitated and surpassed. Among these models Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* is not to be included; but the circumstance that Marlowe left the latter unfinished behind him in 1593, the very year of the publication of *Venus and Adonis*, adds to the interest of the comparison between the two poems which so naturally suggests itself.

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[1] Mr. Fleay supposes the first version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to have been Shakspere's retort upon Greene—a more than hazardous conjecture.

[2] I must reserve for a later page some discussion of the very interesting problem (Spedding recognised it as such) concerning Shakspere's supposed authorship of the tragedy of *Sir Thomas More* (1590 *c.*). But that he had some share at least in the several parts of *Henry VI* and in *Titus Andronicus*—though perhaps not in the earliest dramatic version of the theme—I may go so far as to assume at once, together with the fact that these plays, whatever they may owe to the authorship, certainly belong to the school, of Marlowe.—*Pericles*, which was not like the above plays included in the First Folio, had the good fortune to be mentioned by Dryden (*Prologue* to Charles D'Avenant's *Circe*, 1670) as its author's first play.

[3] Fleay, *History of the Stage*, p. 94.

[4] Cf. Fleay, *Life of Shakespeare*, p. 20.

Venus and Adonis (1593), *and The Rape of Lucrece* (1594).

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[1] See the Dedication of *Venus and Adonis.*

[2] It issued from the printing-press of Richard Field, who was the son of a Stratford-on-Avon tradesman (a personal acquaintance of John Shakspere's), and who had in 1589 printed a copy of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. See *Outlines*, vol. i. p. 89.

[3] See *Lectures and Notes on Shakspere*, &c. (ed. Ashe), p. 218.

[4] See *Biographia Literaria*, chap. xv, which, it must be allowed, is designed to illustrate, from the examples of *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece*, the unmistakeable promise shown by even immature poetic genius.

Both *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece* were dedicated to Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, who, born in 1573, had succeeded to the title in 1581. He was accordingly still very young, and fresh from the literary influences of St. John's College, Cambridge, and Gray's Inn; but to the literary and theatrical tastes of his youthful years he remained true even after his activity of mind had begun to find other and more hazardous outlets[1]. It would seem as if his permission had not been previously asked for the dedication of the first edition of *Venus and Adonis*; but the dedication to *The Rape of Lucrece*[2] in the following year implies a close personal relation between poet and patron. ? There can be no doubt but that upon these two poems, taken together, the literary reputation of Shakspere substantially rested in the eyes of many of his contemporaries; and we are not likely to mistake in supposing him to have put them forth with a view to securing a position in the world of letters, of which the stage had not as yet succeeded in vindicating its claim to form an integral part. It was in the same select circle that, as we learn from the statement of Meres in 1598, Shakspere's *Sonnets* were handed about privately for the delectation of his patrons. Two of these poems were in 1599 surreptitiously published by the bookseller Jaggard, in a small volume of verse entitled *The Passionate Pilgrim*, to the First Part of which he unwarrantably prefixed Shakspere's name, but which comprised, together with some poems already printed by Barnfield as Shakspere's, and which may be actually his, others that must unhesitatingly be pronounced either to belong to other authors, or to be so unworthy of Shakspere as not to be assignable to him on evidence so full of doubt[3].

Earlier Sonnets (*by* 1598).

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[1] In 1599—the year in which he served under Essex in Ireland—he is spoken of as spending an interval of leisure in London 'merrily in going to plays every day.'—For a memoir of Southampton, see the *Variorum Shakespeare* (1821), vol. xx.

[2] As to Thomas Heywood's tragedy, *The Rape of Lucrece* (printed 1608), see below; there may possibly have existed an earlier play on the subject.

[3] Two of these ('If Music and Sweet Poetry agree' and 'As it fell upon a day') were among Richard Barnefeild's *Poems in divers Humors*, published, together with his *Encomion of Lady Pecunia*, in 1598. He was an admirer of Shakspere; see *ante*, vol. i. p. 495, *note* 1. Cf. Dyce, p. lxvi. and *note*.

The pieces in this collection which may with certainty be ascribed to Shakspere are three lyrics recurring in *Love's Labour's Lost*[1] and two of the *Sonnets*[2], afterwards (in 1609) republished as part of the complete series. If, as I for one am disposed to think, the 'W. H.' to whom the first edition of these *Sonnets* was inscribed was William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, we should require no further evidence of his intimate relations with Shakspere; but on this head more immediately[3]. As to the great advance in Shakspere's reputation and social position which resulted from the publication of his non-dramatic poems no doubt can be entertained.

Shakspere's career as an actor and dramatist (1594–1598).

The temporary interruption of theatrical performances in London had soon come to an end, and Shakspere's connexion with the stage had more and more manifestly prospered. The company with which he was connected seems after the death, early in 1594, of Lord Derby (better known as Lord Strange), to have passed into the service of the Lord Chamberlain (Lord Hunsdon)[4], and it continued to perform under the title of the Chamberlain's men during the remainder of the Queen's reign. There is no actual proof that Shakspere took part in the performance of two comedies which this company acted before her at Greenwich, on December 26 and 28 of that year, although together with Kempe and Richard Burbage he afterwards received payment for these entertainments[5]; nor is it absolutely certain, though extremely probable, that the *Comedy of Errors* which on the same Innocents' Day was played at Gray's Inn, being probably the very piece which on that morning the company had acted at Greenwich for the diversion of the Queen, was the play known to us as Shakspere's[1]. But these data, at all events, go some way towards justifying the assumption that by the commencement of the year 1595 he had, both as a playwright and as an actor, come to be in request. There seems no necessity for illustrating here by further details as to the performances of his plays, the popularity which as a dramatist he from this time forward evidently commanded. As to the actual position, from a commercial or financial point of view, of the theatrical enterprises with which he was associated as an actor and a playwright, we remain for some years further without direct evidence. It is, for instance, unknown, whether in 1596, when James Burbage acquired the house which was soon afterwards (either a little before or soon after his death) converted by his celebrated son Richard into the Blackfriars theatre, thus offering an enlarged sphere to the company's operations, Shakspere was admitted to a share in the profits as a 'housekeeper' beyond the ordinary actor's share (which may have been augmented in acknowledgement of his services as chief writer for the company). Nor, again, can we say whether he accompanied his fellows on particular strolling expeditions into different parts of the country; whether, for example, he went with them in 1597 to Dover, where he might have stood on the cliff which, by reason of his incomparably impressive description of it in *King Lear*, has come to be called by his name,—or in the same year to Rye and its vicinity, that quaint and quiet corner in which Shakspere's England seems to survive almost more characteristically than even in his own Warwickshire[1]. That he formed part of the company of English players who visited Edinburgh in 1599, and to whom King James VI granted his license to play, thereby causing 'new jars' with the ministers of the Kirk, is an unproved although likewise seductive suggestion[2]. His popularity as a dramatist had steadily increased; in 1598 Meres, who extols him in his *Palladis Tamia* as among 'the best for' both tragedy and comedy—the only writer except Chapman to whom he accords this double distinction[3]—mentions not less than six tragedies or histories and six comedies which, in Mr. Fleay's words[4], may be held to have constituted the Shakspere *répertoire*, formed it must be remembered in not more than four years, of the Chamberlain's company. So rapid a stride into fame is surprising, although not out of keeping with the rate of speed generally characteristic of the labours of theatrical managers and dramatic authors in this period. During the two years, or rather more, over which a list of plays performed by the rival company of the Lord Admiral's men extends, not less than forty new plays, or an average of a new play every seventeen or eighteen days, were produced[5]. The plays mentioned by Meres include not more than two of which Shakspere's independent authorship can be regarded as contestable[6]. But all questions as to the particular plays,

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[1] Act iv. scenes 2 and 3.

[2] cxxxviii. and cxliv.

[3] Mr. Fleay, who adheres to the theory that the first continuous portion of the *Sonnets* (i–cxxvi) was addressed to Southampton, accepts Dr. Ingleby's conjecture that the '*W. S.*' of Henry Willobie's *Avisa* (1594) is Shakspere, and regards the argument of the poem as an allegory of what he holds to be the story of the *Sonnets*, the '*H. W.*' of the poem being Henry Wriothesley, and the black woman of the *Sonnets* being identical with Avisa, who he inclines to think dwelt in the vale of Evesham. (See *Life of Shakespeare*, pp. 120–125, and cf. *Centurie of Prayse*, *u. s.*, pp. 7–11.)

[4] This, which seems the most obvious suggestion, is Mr. Fleay's; *Life*, p. 115. On Lord Hunsdon's death in 1596 the company passed into the patronage of his son and heir and official successor.

[5] See the extract in Halliwell-Phillipps, *Outlines*, vol. i. p. 109, from the MS. accounts of the Treasurer of the Chamber.

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[1] Henry Helmes, 'Prince of Purpoole' on the occasion, left a record (afterwards printed in the *Gesta Grayorum*, 1688), setting forth how after the members of Gray's Inn had combined with the members of the Inner Temple for purposes of high revelry, things were so badly managed that the Templars withdrew in dudgeon, whereupon after some dancing the company had to be contented with 'a Comedy of Errors, like to Plautus his Menechmus,' played by the players—whence the night 'was ever afterwards called the Night of Errors.' It is however, as Halliwell-Phillipps observes, lamentable to note that in a sportive enquiry on the following day 'a company of base and common fellows' was said to have been 'foisted to make up the disorders' of the lawyers 'with a play of errors and confusion.'

Meres' testimony to his popularity (1598).

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[1] See *Outlines*, vol. i. pp. 118–9. The company in the same summer travelled westward as far as Bristol.

[2] See Collier, vol. i. pp. 331–2 and *note*; and cf. the notice of the entries as to the *Inglis Commedianis* in the accounts of the Lords High Treasurers of Scotland, dating from November and December 1599, in *Appendix* to *Introduction* to (Family) *Letters to James VI* (*Maitland Club Publications*, 1835), p. lxxv. From one of these entries it appears that the king protected the comedians in their performances against the decrees of 'the eldaris and deacons of the haill four sessiouns of Edinburgh.'

[3] He also names Shakspere among 'the best Lyrick Poets' and among 'the most passionate to bewaile and bemoane the perplexities of Love,' besides paying him further tributes of select praise.

[4] *Life of Shakespeare*, p. 205.

[5] See Collier's Introduction to Henslowe's *Diary*, p. xviii. At the beginning of this period both the Admiral's and the Chamberlain's men acted together at Newington Butts, but it seems an error to suppose that any such combination continued at the Rose. See Fleay, *History of the Stage*, p. 140.

[6] Viz. *The Comedy of Errors* and *Titus Andronicus*. As to Mr. Fleay's theory concerning the authorship of *Richard III*, see below.

and as to the special circumstances which attended their production, must be reserved for another place. The list as it stands superabundantly demonstrates the rapid progress of his success as a playwright in this the most actively creative period of his career. With such a record of work already done and of reputation already achieved, it is not surprising to find, that in 1599, when Richard and Cuthbert Burbage built the Globe theatre in Maiden Lane, Bankside,—intended in the first instance to supplement the Blackfriars winter as a summer-theatre,—Shakspere was admitted, together with Heminge, Condall, Philips and others, to be a 'partner in the profittes of what they call the House.' In the agreement they were all termed 'deserving men,' but Shakspere's name seems to have stood first on the list. Of the number of the shares we know nothing, or of the ratio in which they were distributed, but we may safely assume that the Burbages reserved to themselves a preponderant proportion of the profits both here and at the Blackfriars, with regard to which a similar arrangement, from which Shakspere likewise benefited, had probably been arrived at[1].

Shakspere admitted as share-holder in the Globe Theatre (1599).

History of Shakspere's family and estate (1596–9.

The labours and achievements of these years, of which London had been all but exclusively the scene, and the life in London itself, had however by no means absorbed Shakspere's interests. In August 1596 (as has been already noted) his only son Hamnet died, and was buried at

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[1] See Mr. S. Lee's notice of Richard Burbage in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, already cited.—The interest in the *new* Globe, after the fire of 1613, was divided into sixteen shares, of which it appears that at one time Heminge's and Condall's widows held four each, and the Burbages the remaining eight.—Shakspere may have originally bought himself into the lease, but whatever money he may have expended on the occasion cannot have amounted to anything like the sum of £1,000, which according to a tradition for which Rowe gives the authority of D'Avenant, Shakspere 'at one time' received from Southampton 'to enable him to go through with a purchase which he had a mind to.' According to another tradition, not traceable beyond 1759, the money was devoted by Shakspere to the purchase of his house and land at Stratford.—Although the amount was doubtless much exaggerated, there is of course nothing improbable in the fact of such a gift.—The allusion to the theatre in the Prologue to *Henry V* leaves no doubt as to this play having been among the earliest produced at the (old) Globe.

Stratford. Here, we may confidently assume, his wife and family had all along continued to reside, instead of sharing his London lodgings 'near the Bear Garden in Southwark[1],' or elsewhere within reach of his daily avocations. From this year onwards, however, evidence accumulates showing the ulterior purposes with which he conducted the business of his life. Shakspere would not have been Shakspere—in other words, a powerful chord of sympathy would have been wanting between him and many generations of his countrymen—had he slighted the claims of family and home, and of the local surroundings of his birth and nurture. To abide sooner or later in regard and respect among those upon whose goodwill he had the nearest claim, was not of course the ideal of his life, but was included among its definite purposes. Indications of a desire in this direction are perceptible in the successive applications (1596 and 1599), in his father's name, for the grant of a coat of arms, which on the second occasion actually issued. And as early as 1597 he purchased in his native town for the sum of £60 a house with nearly an acre of land, the famous 'New Place,' which according to a familiar paradox in English local nomenclature was at the time very antique and probably much dilapidated[2]. When in the next and in subsequent years Shakspere is mentioned in municipal documents, it is accordingly under the invariable style of 'William Shakspere, of Stratford on Avon, gentleman[3]. At New Place, which ultimately became his residence, he planted the beginnings of a fruit-garden, and otherwise improved and maintained his property[4]. In 1598 there is evidence not only of his intention to purchase additional land, but of this intention having been known at Stratford, and having led to pecuniary negotiations with him on the part of both the corporation and individual acquaintances, in which he appears in the character of a lender of money and negotiator of loans[1].

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[1] The address is furnished by Malone, on the authority of one of the Alleyn MSS. inspected by him. See Fleay, *Life*, p. 128.

[2] Halliwell-Phillipps, *Outlines*, p. 119.

[3] *Ib.*, p. 122.

[4] The foundations of the house remain, and by the pious exertions of Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps, who in 1864 published a folio volume on New Place, the garden has been restored to something like its original form.

Shakspere's contribution to Love's Martyr (1601).

Towards the close of 1601 Shakspere appeared as one of the contributors to a collection of shorter pieces of verse joined to Robert Chester's long allegorical poem *Love's Martyr*, all of which professed to treat the theme of true love as shadowed forth in the fable of the Phoenix and the Turtle. Among the other contributors whom Chester had brought or pressed into the service of his design were Chapman, Jonson, and Marston. Shakspere's dirge has a mystic colouring, but there is no reason for supposing that it veils any personal meaning, such as has been supposed to underlie Chester's verses[2]. Far otherwise stands the case with the *Sonnets*, which by about the turn of the century must have become familiar to the *conoscenti* in a more or less complete form. Much has been written on the subject that is purely conjectural, but the general results of the enquiry can no longer be regarded as negative only, nor is it possible to remain contented with a halting conclusion such as Dyce's, who pronounced that 'most of the *Sonnets* were composed in an assumed character, on different subjects, and at different times, for the amusement (if not at the suggestion) of the author's intimate friends.' For myself, I cannot but think that a satisfactory case has been made out on behalf of the conclusion that the earlier series of the *Sonnets* is addressed to a young man, and the latter to a lady—but that the two are organically connected by the circumstance that the lady was loved by both the poet's friend and the poet himself. I further consider that the youth to whom the earlier *Sonnets* were directly addressed, and who in the dedication of the entire published collection accordingly

The Sonnets (1609).

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[1] For details, see *Outlines*, vol. i. pp. 145 *seqq.* The letter from Richard Quiney (whose son Thomas afterwards married Judith Shakspere) there printed in *facsimile*, applying to Shakspere for a loan, is the only extant letter addressed to him. There is no proof that it was actually delivered.—A successful recovery by Shakspere of a small sum of money due to him is noted early in 1601 (*ib.*, pp. 169–70).

[2] See Halliwell-Phillipps, *Outlines*, pp. 173–4. Mr. Bullen, in his brief notice of Chester in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. x. (1887), describes Chester's poem as 'of obscure import,' and Shakspere's as 'enigmatical.'

figured as its 'only begetter,' has with a probability approaching very near to certainty been shown to be William Herbert, second Earl of Pembroke, who about this time was in the very heyday of his youth—'the very picture and *viva effigies* of nobility[1].' On the other hand. I must decline to pin my faith to any of the ingenious attempts which have been made to identify the black lady of the *Sonnets*, however seductive one or more of them may be in their imaginative combination of actual data[2]. Thus there seems but little prospect of determining how far the successive phases of the drama of passion unfolded by Shakspere correspond to actual experiences undergone by him, or in what measure the superstructure erected on a basis of real relations was reared by fancy's irresponsible agency. Perhaps the most interesting feature in the *Sonnets* —from a biographical point of view—is the revelation which they furnish of Shakspere's consciousness of his own poetic genius and its deserts[3]. When in 1609, evidently several years after the body of them had been composed, the *Sonnets* were entrusted by some friend or acquaintance—possibly by Pembroke himself—to the eager hands of an enterprising publisher, they seem to have been accompanied by the stanzas called *A Lover's Complaint*, as these were brought out in the same printed volume. I am not aware that Shakspere's authorship of this poem, which is archaising and in some degree stilted in form, and accordingly suggests a juvenile period of authorship, has ever been seriously disputed[4]. It must however be remembered that Shakspere's consent was neither asked nor

A Lover's Complaint (1609).

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[1] Antony Wood.

[2] Dr. G. Brandes' endeavours in this direction (in his biography of Shakspere, German translation, pp. 389 *seqq.*) are the most recent, and not the least courageous. I can. however, assure him that the figure of Mary Fitton in Gawsworth Church, Cheshire, is not worth drawing into the argument, more especially as this figure and that of Mary's sister Anne are virtually duplicates.

[3] See Coleridge. *Biographia Literaria*, chap. ii., referring specially to *Sonnets* lxxxi. and lxxvi.

[4] In their respective works on Shakspere's *Sonnets*, Mr. Gerald Massey and Mr. Henry Brown suggested, the former that the *Complaint* refers to the loves of Shakspere and Anne Hathaway, the latter that it allegorises the amour between Queen Elisabeth and Leicester.

given to the publication of this piece—any more than to that of one of the *Sonnets*, which, from a very different point of view, it is painful to associate with his name.

Pembroke. Southampton.

At the time when Shakspere was writing the *Sonnets*, Pembroke's brilliant star had but recently appeared on the horizon of London and Court life. The star of his other, and earlier, friend and patron, Southampton, had about the same period been obscured by the troubles brought down upon himself and his friends by the self-confidence of his relative Essex. Southampton, who in 1599 had served as Lieutenant-General of the Horse in Essex's Irish expedition, was involved in the subsequent designs which ended in the tragic catastrophe of 1601. Though pardoned, he was kept in prison during the remainder of Elisabeth's reign; and under James he was unable to satisfy the ambition or fulfil the promise of his earlier manhood. Shakspere was most assuredly alive to the dramatic series of events affecting Southampton and his fortunes. Apart from the impressiveness belonging to the dramatic sequence of these events themselves, there can be no doubt as to the enduring nature of the relations between the two men[1]. In *Henry V*, acted at the Globe theatre in 1599, Shakspere referred with sympathetic emphasis to Essex's Irish expedition then in progress[2]. Whether Shakspere's *Richard II* was the play concerning the fate of that prince acted on the eve of the outbreak of Essex's conspiracy (February, 1601) remains a disputed question[3]. The references to that plot in *Henry VIII* hardly admit of doubt; and *The Tempest*, written not earlier than 1610, was composed under the impressions produced by the results of an expedition (1608) which had been fitted out by Southampton, Pembroke, and other adventurers.

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[1] An interesting illustration of Southampton and his family's intimacy with Shakspere's plays is given in the late Dr. Brewer's essay on Hatfield House, already cited. In a letter from Lady Southampton to her husband, preserved among the Hatfield Papers, she introduces Falstaff and Dame Quickly as household names.

[2] In the *Chorus* before act v. Cf. Fleay, *Life of Shakespeare*, p. 206.

[3] See below as to this and the other Shaksperean plays referred to in the text. See also Fleay, *Life of Shakespeare*, p. 218, as to the apparent allusion in *All's Well that Ends Well* to Elisabeth's gift of a ring to Essex.—It may be worth observing that both this play and *Twelfth Night*, although belonging to the period in which the party of Essex was prominently before the public, contain satirical reflexions on Puritanism, to whose support that party appealed.

Shakspere's literary and theatrical associates.

It was not, however, by the devotion with which patriotic sympathy or personal attachment inspired him towards his high-born patrons, or by the return which they were able to make to him, that Shakspere in his later years succeeded in completing the substantial edifice of a fair worldly prosperity. His best friends he cannot but have sought among the constant companions of his everyday toil—for who could have so well understood the aspirations that winged his efforts? Such a one was above all the foremost of Shakspere's fellow-dramatists, who, a few years younger than himself, had owed his first notable success to a play produced by Shakspere's company,—according to a kindly tradition, in consequence of Shakspere's personal intervention. The progress of his acquaintance with Ben Jonson must have been of much importance to Shakspere in those hours of relaxation in which both great men and small most easily lend themselves to the influences of companionship. Our imagination cannot help dwelling on the meetings of a pair at once so well-assorted and so different, and on the wit-combats, immortalised by tradition, which must have been infinitely more captivating than the soliloquies which dominant literary genius is in the habit of delivering to the associates of its unrestraint. Yet although the Mermaid in Cornhill has a claim to mention in any sketch of Shakspere's biography by the side of the Boar's Head in Eastcheap, it is to Ben Jonson's memory that the London taverns of his age are more peculiarly consecrated[1]. Among Shakspere's constant associates on the boards, in the business of the theatre, and (who can doubt it?) in the familiarity of daily life, the great actor Richard Burbage—whose intellectual versatility is characteristic of the commanding professional eminence reached by him—must have been almost uniquely attractive to his many-sided observing sympathy. Together with their fellows, Heminge and Condell, Richard Burbage finds mention in Shakspere's will[1].

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[1] A list of them is to be found in an old quarto entitled *Newes from Bartholomew Faire.* (See Drake's *Shakspeare and his Times*, vol. ii. p. 133. As to the attempts—in part extremely melancholy—of legend to revive specimens of the wit-combats between Shakspere and Ben Jonson, see *ib.*, p. 593, *note.* Fuller's life-like reminiscence of them must suffice for posterity.)

Steady advance of his private fortunes (1602–1610).

While the storms of which we have made mention were raging in the upper air, Shakspere had continued to prosper in his private concerns. In May 1602 we find him (through his brother Gilbert, so that he may himself be supposed to have been in London) purchasing, for the very substantial sum of £320, 107 acres of land near Stratford, and expending further money in establishing by a legal process the complete validity of his title to New Place. In the same year he added to this property a small piece of land covered by a cottage and garden[2]. Three years later, in 1605, he effected the most considerable purchase ever completed by him, paying £440 for the unexpired term of half the interest of a lease of the tithes of Stratford and certain other parishes[3]. The growing importance and consequent complexity of his affairs is attested by a private law-suit for the recovery of a debt in 1608 and 1609, and another instituted at his instance or with his consent in connexion with his ownership of part of the parish tithes. And in

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[1] I excuse myself from repeating the scandalous anecdote reported in Manningham's *Diary* concerning Shakspere and Burbage.—According to Collier, vol. i. p. 413 *note*, Richard Burbage was proficient in painting as well as in playing. See as to him, *ib.*, vol. iii. pp. 257 *seqq.*, and Mr. S. Lee's notice, already cited, in *The Dictionary of National Biography*. Middleton's epitaph on Richard Burbage (who died in March 1619), after a fashion recalls Johnson's famous eulogy of Garrick:

> 'Astronomers and star-gazers this year
> Write but of four eclipses; five appear,
> Death interposing Burbage; and this staying
> Hath made a visible eclipse of playing.'

(See Middleton's *Works*, edited by Dyce, vol. v. p. 503).—As to Heminge and Condell, see Collier, vol. iii. pp. 304–321, and 321–360.—I may take this opportunity of noting that the assertion of a royalist pamphleteer, that Hugh Peters, 'chaplain to the train' in the New Model army, was a Fool in Shakspere's company, is contradicted by the date of his birth (1598). See Gardiner's *History of the Great Civil War*, vol. ii (1889), p. 298.

[2] Halliwell-Phillipps, *Outlines*, vol. i. pp. 184–5.

[3] *Ib.*, p. 197. The lease had been granted in 1544 for ninety-two years. The net value of Shakspere's income from the tithes is estimated by Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps at about £38 *per annum*. (See p. 211).—See *ib.*, p. 195, as to Shakspere's visit to Stratford in 1604, and his recovery at law of the balance of a debt owing to him for a sale of malt.

1610 he appears as the purchaser of 20 acres (this time of pasture-land) near Stratford, raising the total of his landed estate to not less than 127 acres[1].

Shakspere and the stage under James I.

Thus, then, the theatrical fortunes of Shakspere, on which his personal prosperity was carefully built up by him, had undergone no change for the worse by the death of Queen Elisabeth and the accession of King James. Whether or not plays were towards the close of the Queen's reign more or less in disfavour at Court on account of the offence given by the performance of the unknown *Richard II*, the theatre necessarily turned with sanguine hopes to the prospect of a new sovereign's patronage. Shakspere appears to have abstained from adding to the numerous poetical expressions of grief for the Queen's demise, and is even supposed to have been (very unnecessarily) taken to task for his silence[2]. His company, which had already on a visit to Scotland in 1601 been received into King James' service, were now licensed as the King's men under a Privy Seal, dated May 17, 1603[3]. In this capacity. ranking among the Grooms of the King's Chamber, the nine actors included in the company—Shakspere being one of them—appeared in the royal train on the King's entrance into London on March 15, 1604. The early troubles of the new reign, except in so far as they affected the fortunes of the London theatre[4], were not of a nature to touch Shakspere personally; but we cannot read of his visits to Warwickshire in these years, without remembering how strongly contemporary comment on the hatching and abortive issue of the 'Gunpowder Plot' must have been forced upon his attention[1]. The King's men were involved in divers troubles of their own in 1604, 1605, and 1606 through indiscretions which gave offence at Court, in the City, and in at least one foreign embassy; but there is no reason either for connecting Shakspere personally with any of these incidents, or for dissociating him from them on the ground that he is not actually known to have appeared on the stage after 1603. To these years (so far as we know) belongs the production of some of the masterpieces of his tragic genius, that of the chief masterpiece of all, *Hamlet*—whether in its present or in an earlier form,—having in all probability but recently preceded them in date. Among these plays were *Othello* and *Measure for Measure*[2], both of which were presented at Whitehall in 1604. *Macbeth* must assuredly have been produced after the accession of James to the English throne, containing as it does a series of obvious allusions to that event. *King Lear*, in which the poet scales the extreme heights of tragic passion, may fitly be held to mark the climax of this last period of high creative productivity, which continued, in an unbroken succession of plays, till within a year or two of Shakspere's final withdrawal from active connexion with the theatre. In 1610, when Richard Burbage and his brother Cuthbert purchased the remainder of the lease of the Blackfriars property, Shakspere's name is not mentioned among the actors of the company[3]; and it has been concluded that this omission shows him to have retired from it after the production of the *Tempest*, of which the date of production

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[1] Halliwell-Phillipps, *Outlines*, p. 211.

[2] See *Centurie of Prayse*, p. 55. But it by no means follows that the 'Melicert,' whom Chettle admonished to

'remember our *Elisabeth*
And sing her Rape, done by that *Tarquin*, Death.'

was intended to mean the author of the *Rape of Lucrece*.—On the other hand there is no proof that Shakspere wrote the complimentary lines to King James that have been attributed to him, but were, as Halliwell-Phillipps surmises, probably written by 'his Majestis Printer.'

[3] Fleay, *History of the Stage*, p. 188; cf. Collier, vol. i. p. 334, where the license, in which Shakspere's name stands second (after that of Lawrence Fletcher) and Burbage's third, is printed at length.

[4] See below as to Mr. Fleay's theory, that the 'inhibition' of the 'city players' by 'the late innovation' (*Hamlet*, act ii. sc. 2) refers to the militant activity of the 'Puritans and Novellists' in the latter part of the year 1603.

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[1] This suggestion was made to me by Professor Hales, who stated on the (unpublished) authority of Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps, that more than one of the conspirators resided (as owners or tenants) in the vicinity of Stratford.

[2] A passage in *Measure for Measure* (act i. sc. 1) has with much probability been supposed to give a complimentary turn to King James' pusillanimous fear of crowds. Such ingenuities may be almost reckoned among those rhetorical elegancies of composition, of which on close examination it will be found that few writers of quick wit and imagination deny themselves an occasional display. But they are not always made to order.

[3] There is indeed no proof that the King's men ever acted there before the burning of the Globe in 1613.

Probable time of his withdrawal from connexion with the theatre.

cannot be far distant from this very year[1]. Although the precise date of this retirement cannot be fixed, it is certain that after 1610 or 1611 he cannot have written much for the stage; indeed, with the exception of *Henry VIII*, or of so much of *Henry VIII* as can be assigned to Shakspere, there is no play which we are constrained to conclude to have been written by him after that date. From the fact that his interest as shareholder in the (old) Globe is not mentioned in his will, it has been concluded that he parted with it some time before his death; but it may have ceased together with his participation in the work of the company as an actor[2] or playwright; or, again, he may have parted with it after he left London. This he can hardly be supposed to have done (although even here the evidence is inconclusive) before March 1613, when at a not inconsiderable price (£140) he purchased and leased a house and shop near the Blackfriars theatre[3]. We must suppose him to have been absent from London on June 29, 1613, when the Globe theatre was burnt down during the performance of a play on the subject of Henry VIII—not necessarily that which bears Shakspere's name; and he may be safely concluded to have remained unconnected with 'the fairest theatre that ever had been in England,' which a year later rose in its place[4].

His retirement at Stratford-on-Avon.

At the time of Shakspere's retirement to his native town, his immediate relatives remaining were few in number. His father had died in 1601, his mother in 1608, his brother Edmund in 1607, his brother Richard in 1613[5]. His sister

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[1] Fleay, *Life of Shakespeare*, pp. 163-5.

[2] This is Mr. Fleay's view. See his argument, *Life of Shakespeare*, pp. 171-2.

[3] Fleay, *u. s.*, p. 170. Cf. in illustration of the whole subject of Shakspere's position as a 'sharer' in Burbage's company or companies, and the supposed value of his share on retiring, J. Greenstreet, 'Documents relating to the Players at the Red Bull, &c., in the time of James I,' in *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, vol. i. (1880-6), p. 8.

[4] This is the description of it given (on hearsay) by John Chamberlain to Mrs. Alice Carleton, under date June 30, 1614 (*Court and Times of James I*, vol. i. p. 339).—A meeting-house was opened for Presbyterian use, in Zoar Street, Southwark, on or near the site of the Globe theatre, six months before the death of John Bunyan (1688), with whose memory this meeting-house appears to have been too freely associated. (See Mr. John Brown's *John Bunyan*, 3rd edn., p. 386.)

[5] His brother Gilbert, the London haberdasher, appears to have survived

Joan, married to a hatter named Hart, was living with her husband and children. His elder daughter Susanna had left home in 1607, when she married Dr. John Hall, a local physician who afterwards rose to considerable repute. The younger daughter Judith was still living with her mother; her marriage with their townsman Thomas Quiney did not take place till February 1616, a few weeks before her father's death. Only a few scattered notices have come down to us concerning his life at Stratford, although very interesting inferences have been drawn from the record of transactions with which he may have had no personal concern whatever. The mock elegy upon John Combe, a leading inhabitant of Stratford whom it charges with usurious practices, cannot have been Shakspere's, if only inasmuch as this very personage in 1614 left a legacy of £5 to Shakspere[1]. The last extant notice of him before the account of his death is the statement as to the action (an unpopular one) taken by him in his own interest in connexion with the proposed enclosure of some common fields by William Combe, the squire of Welcombe, in the year 1614[2]. What we know concerning him in the period of his retirement, only enables us to conclude that he lived in material comfort; in his will, which was executed on March 25, 1616, he describes himself as in perfect health. He was then in his fifty-fourth year, and on April 23 following —a date more or less closely coincident with the close of that year—he died[3]. A local tradition as to the cause of his death declared him to have died of a fever contracted in

His death (*April* 23, 1616).

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him. I cannot follow Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps in his determination of the precise meaning of a Stratford tradition dating as far back as 1693, that Shakspere 'was the best of his family.'

[1] Halliwell-Phillipps, *Outlines*, vol. i. p. 226.

[2] *Ib.*, pp. 226 *seqq.*; cf. Fleay, *Life of Shakespeare*, pp. 173–4.

[3] Ticknor, *History of Spanish Literature*, vol. ii. p. 132 *note*, pointed out that Shakspere died April 23, 1616, *O. S.*; Cervantes on the same date, *N. S.* Carlyle, who makes the same correction of a popular blunder (Introduction to *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*), also mentions that Oliver Cromwell was entered at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, on the actual date of Shakspere's death.—I am not aware, by the way, whether the curious circumstance has been noted that Fuller in his *Worthies of England* states that Shakspere died 'anno Domini 16 . . ,' having apparently been unable, when writing, to fill up the blank, although he had been personally acquainted with Shakspere.

consequence of a bout of drinking with his old associates Michael Drayton and Ben Jonson at a tavern in Stratford-on-Avon[1]. Probably there was no more need in Stratford town of any such extraneous cause for the breeding of a fever in the days of Shakspere's decline than there had been in those of his infancy. He was buried in the parish church on the 25th of the same month, being, as a late part-owner of the tithes, laid in the chancel. It is stated to have been a common custom at Stratford to move the bones of the buried from the church at stated times into a charnel-house; hence the well-known lines on Shakspere's tomb popularly ascribed to his own authorship. Whoever wrote them, deserves a blessing, if, as is said, they actually prevented at the last moment an attempt to violate, 'in the interests of science,' the law of piety which they enjoin.

Scandal about Shakspere.

Shakspere's will is in our hands[2], but there is little or nothing to be read out of it which reveals to us even the slightest corner of his life or character. On the whole, it is rather wonderful than otherwise, that in reference to his later days (with the exception of the story concerning the supposed cause of his death) the gossip, which must have filled the little Puritan town[1], should have left so few and trifling traces behind. And, if we survey the entire range of his biography, what has the scandal of nearly two generations—and very scandalous generations they were—contrived to perpetuate in the way of blots, fictitious or not, upon his personal history? The story of a wild freak (not so bad a robbery as Prince Hal's) in his raw youth;—concerning the days of his manhood, a 'green-room canard,' as it has been aptly termed[2], for which Pope's authority was Betterton, reporting Shakspere to have been the father of Sir William D'Avenant[3];—and as to his old age, the aforesaid, not very heinous, charge of a glass in excess at a meeting with old friends, and the inevitable accusation that he 'dyed a papist[4].' The silence—or what all but amounts to silence—of anecdotage implies more than an accidental tribute to the conduct of a life.

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[1] The tradition is handed down by John Ward, Vicar of Stratford 1662-1681, in the so-called *Diary*, to which reference has already been made. His words are as follows: 'Shakespeare, Drayton, and Ben Jonson, had a merie meeting, and itt seems drank too hard, for Shakespear died of a feavour there contracted.' The story may be true or may be false; but it is worth noting that it is the solitary piece of information concerning Shakspere imparted by Mr. Ward, with the exception of a true statement as to the husband and daughter of his elder daughter Susanna, and the following not very valuable contribution to Shaksperean biography: 'I have heard that Mr. Shakspeare was a natural wit, without any art at all; hee frequented the plays all his younger time, but in his elder days lived at Stratford, and supplied the stage with two plays every year, and for itt had an allowance so large, that he spent att the rate of £1,000 a-year, as I have heard.' This worthy vicar, though a student of both books and men, and a shrewd observer, either read Shakspere only late in life, or more probably never read him at all, for we find him making the following note and query: 'Remember to peruse Shakespeare's plays, and bee much versed in them, that I may not bee ignorant in that matter.—Whether Dr. Heylin does well, in reckoning up the dramatick poets which have been famous in England, to omit Shakespeare.'

[2] It has been reproduced from the original in Somerset House by various processes of photography, in Staunton's *Memorials of Shakespeare*, in vol. xxiv. (1889) of the *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, &c.

His descendants.

Shakspere's wife survived him till 1623; but his estate went to their daughter Susanna Hall and her husband, and after them to their child Elisabeth, who married first Thomas Nash and then Sir John Barnard, but left no issue by either. With Lady Barnard's death in 1670 Shakspere's line became extinct, Judith Quiney having survived all her descendants and died at a great age in 1662[5].

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[1] Plays were prohibited at Stratford in 1601 and 1612. (Dyce, p. cx.)

[2] See *Prefatory Memoir* to *The Dramatic Works of D'Avenant* (1872), p. xxii.

[3] Halliwell-Phillipps, *more suo*, draws out the story at length, *à propos* of the visit of the Chamberlain's men to Oxford in 1605, but discredits it.

[4] This was mentioned as a fact by Davies, who died in 1708, in his additions to Fulman's MS. collections. Inasmuch as all Shakspere's children were baptised at the parish church, there is at least no doubt as to which form of faith Shakspere professed. Attempts have been repeatedly made to show that he was a Catholic at heart; but this is of course a different matter. One of these appeared in a journal called *The Rambler* (1854); a more notable one is that of the French writer A. F. Rio, examined by M. Bernays in *Jahrbuch*, vol. i. (1865); others have, I believe, preceded and followed these.

[5] Halliwell-Phillipps, *Outlines*, vol. i. pp. 247–256. See also the Pedigree of Shakspere's grand-daughter and her husband's children in *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, vol. i. p. 8, Appendix (1880-6).—Gardiner, *History of the Great Civil War*, vol. i. pp. 193-4, mentions a tradition (dating from a quarter of a century afterwards), according to which Queen Henrietta Maria was the guest of Shakspere's grand-daughter at Stratford on the night of July 11, 1643, before meeting King Charles at Edgehill on the 13th.

Portraits of Shakspere.

The Stratford monument by Gerard Johnson, which was certainly in existence in 1623, and the half-length portrait on the title-page of the folio of 1623, published by Shakspere's associates Heminge and Condell, which was engraved by Droeshout [1], are the only portraits of the poet which can be regarded as contemporary authorities as to his personal appearance. The countenance of the bust may have been copied from a mask taken from the dead poet, according to a common custom of the times; and a mask of him is actually claimed as a genuine relic by its German possessor [2]. The celebrated Chandos portrait [3] has been conjecturally traced to the possession of the actor Joseph Taylor (who played Hamlet in 1596), and was reputed to have been painted either by his brother John Taylor or by Richard Burbage. The portrait by Cornelius Jansen bears the inscription 1610, and may have been painted in England, where this artist painted a picture of a daughter of Southampton. Into the question of the claims, absolute or relative, of these portraits I cannot enter; nor need I refer to portraits which cannot be said to have any claims at all [4]. Whether the paucity of contemporary portraits of the poet—to adopt even the most favourable hypothesis as to their number—be attributable to the circumstances of his social position, or to his personal modesty, the fact at least well accords with our general conception of Shakspere's conduct of his life. The traditions which Aubrey handed down as to his personal appearance cannot be regarded as of very high value;

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[1] It is prefixed to Mr. Collier's edition of 1844. It has the authority of Ben Jonson's tribute, which however, as Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps remarks, may have been written by Jonson before he saw the engraving. Boaden thought it represented Shakspere in a *character*, viz. that of Old Knowell in Jonson's play. The supposition is both ingenious and convenient.

[2] Dr. Becker of Darmstadt, private secretary to the late Princess (afterwards Grand-Duchess) Alice of Hesse. See K. Elze, *Shakespeare's Bildnisse*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. vi. (1869).

[3] Now in the National Portrait Gallery.

[4] As to the former see Sir George Scharf, *On the principal portraits of Shakspeare* (reprinted from *Notes and Queries*, 1864). Among the latter reference has already been made to the so-called 'Marriage Picture' (*ante*, p. 14). An earlier appeal to faith was made in the instance of the 'bellows' portrait, acquired by Talma and exhibited by him in 1822 to Charles Lamb, who seems to have rather inclined to believe in its genuineness.

the belief that he was lame rests mainly upon that very doubtful basis, a literal interpretation of a passage or two in the *Sonnets*[1].

Summary.

The net results of the above outline seems to show—not to differ very materially from those indicated in Steevens' well-known saying:—'all that is known with any degree of certainty concerning Shakespeare is that he was born at Stratford-upon-Avon, married and had children there; went to London, where he commenced actor and wrote poems and plays; returned to Stratford, made his will, died and was buried.' Indeed, brief as this statement is, it might be shown to err here and there on the side of over-precision. One remark may be added. There is nothing in what we know of the personal life of Shakspere, if broadly and candidly judged, to impugn the noblest conception we may be able to form of his personal character and conduct; and from a survey of the dry details which the laborious industry of posterity has succeeded in bringing together concerning it, we may therefore turn with a natural wish for more, but without any desire for anything different, to such a review as the scheme of this book admits, of the works in which he really and enduringly lives.

Chronological order of Shakspere's plays.

The following is a list of Shakspere's plays in what, after the best consideration which it has been in my power to give to the subject, seems to me their most probable order of composition. In this list I have thought it most convenient to include all the plays traditionally denoted as Shakspere's,—in other words, all those included in the First Folio—of 1623—with the addition of *Pericles*, which was included in the 1664 issue of the Third Folio. The addition of an obelisk (†) is intended to imply that doubts which appear to me to deserve serious consideration, have been thrown on Shakspere's authorship of any play so marked, either in whole or in part. In the notes appended to the names of the several plays in this list will be found brief statements as to their probable sources, and such general information as to subject and treatment as can be here indicated[1]. I shall reserve for separate treatment another series of plays which have at various times and in the most widely different degrees of probability, or improbability, been attributed to Shakspere, although standing outside the aforesaid canon.

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[1] See French, *u. s.*, pp. 569–71, where it is ingeniously pointed out that Shakspere's lameness would not have interfered with his acting of the Ghost in *Hamlet*, and would have positively accorded with the description of Adam in *As You Like It* (ii. 6). Cf. Waldron's *Sad Shepherd, Appendix*, p. 179. The Sonnets in question are xxxvii. and lxix.; but such evidence will hardly convince us that we should include Shakspere in the list of great men with a deformity, on whom Burton so learnedly discourses in his *Anatomy of Melancholy* (ii. 3. 1. 1).

Tests to be used in determining it:

The chronology of Shakspere's plays is one of the most difficult, as it is beyond all doubt one of the most important, subjects of Shaksperean study. While absolute certainty cannot be looked for with regard to the entire list, it may reasonably be hoped that a canon of enduring authority is now fairly on its way to establishment. In any case, it may serve a useful purpose to point out what are the tests which have been, and which in part still remain to be, applied to the several plays from this point of view. These tests may be described as either *external* or *internal*, and the two groups may be subdivided as follows[2].

I. *External.*

I. EXTERNAL TESTS.

(a) *Mention in other works.*

(*a*) The *terminus ante quem*, or the latest date by which particular plays must have been in existence (though not necessarily in the precise form in which we possess them), is fixed by a mention of them in other books or documents of ascertained date. The most important of these books for this purpose is the *Palladis Tamia*, or *Wit's Treasury*, by Francis Meres, printed in 1598 (according to Halliwell-Phillipps early in that year). Meres mentions six comedies and six tragedies by Shakspere, all of them, with the exception of one comedy, by the names which they bear in the First Folio. Conversely, it may be concluded (though not with equal certainty) that when a play is not mentioned by Meres, it was either not yet in existence, or was for some special reason omitted by him. Neither of these conclusions can of course be drawn from the non-mention of plays in books devoid of any enumerative or special critical design. Such books are the Diaries which have been preserved from Shakspere's time.

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[1] The authorities from which these notes have been compiled are as far as possible cited in each case. The principal are the *Variorum* edition of 1821, the editions of Dyce, Collier, Delius, Staunton, Dr. Furnivall (*Leopold Shakspere*), Mr. H. H. Furness (*New Variorum*), Mr. W. A. Wright (Clarendon Press), and others already referred to; Gervinus' *Shakespeare* (1849–50): Ulrici's *Shakespeare's Dramatic Art* (Eng. translation); Simrock's *Quellen des Shakspeare* (2nd edn., 1870); Fleay's *Chronicle History of the Life and Work of Shakespeare* (1886); H. P. Stokes' *Attempt to determine the Chronological Order of Shakespeare's Plays* (1878); the *Publications* of the (old) *Shakespeare* and the *New Shakspere Societies*, and the *Jahrbuch der deutschen Shakespeare-Gesellschaft.*

[2] This attempt to distinguish the principal tests of the chronology of Shakspere's plays was made before the publication (in *The Academy*, Jan. 10, 1874) of a synopsis of a lecture by Professor J. W. Hales on the *Succession of Shakspere's Plays.* I have permitted myself in one or two points to make use of his admirably clear scheme, and of others which have been put forth since the publication of the first edition of this book.

(b) *Allusions in other works.*

(*b*) The *terminus ante quem* may also occasionally be thought to be fixed by allusions in other books of ascertained date to characters or passages in Shaksperean plays. The term 'allusions' is here employed as including quotations, imitations and parodies, as well as references of greater or less distinctness; but it is obvious that these allusions, of whatever description they may be, will frequently remain open to dispute, and that upon their distinctness the value of the evidence supplied by them will in each case depend.

(c) *First known publication, and entry in Stationers' Registers.*

(*c*) The *terminus ante quem* (not the actual date of composition) is fixed by the date of the first known publication of any particular play[1]. In general a play was printed—often surreptitiously—because of the popularity achieved by it upon the stage; but the measure in which this circumstance approaches to one another the dates of first production on the stage and of first publication can but very rarely be conjectured. The mere date of the entry of a play on the *Stationers' Registers*[2] may prove nothing more than that the composition of the play in question was in hand, or under contemplation.—Although logically perhaps this subsidiary species of evidence should have been noticed under a previous heading, I may here also refer to the presumptions based upon the publication, or entry in the *Registers*, of works bearing similar titles to those of Shaksperean plays.

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[1] A complete list of the quarto editions of Shakspere's plays is given by Mr. Fleay in Table I of the Appendix to his *Life of Shakespeare*.

[2] It is perhaps unnecessary for me to take this opportunity of acknowledging the obligations which in common with every other student of Elisabethan literature I owe to Professor E. Arber's *Transcripts of the Stationers'*

(d) *First production of plays on the stage.*

(*d*) The date of the first production of a play on the stage (in Shakspere's case, we may rest assured, hardly ever remote from that of its completion in its written form) is only derivable from a statement asserting or implying that such a play was acted as a *new* play. It should, however, be remembered that even this term is, in the theatrical records of the period, occasionally applied to the production of a mere revision of a play written for production at a previous date, and revived with alterations and 'additions[1].'

II. *Internal.*

II. INTERNAL TESTS.

(a) *References or allusions in the plays.*

(*a*) Although constituting an extremely uncertain test, the use of which demands far more sobriety of judgment than has at times been displayed in its application, the mention of, or allusion to, particular historical events, as well as references to plays or other writings of ascertained dates, may be used to show the Shaksperean play in which they occur to have been actually or probably written about a certain time, or at all events not to have been written after it. Among the historical events may be facts which are known concerning Shakspere's personal life, or which have a more or less direct connexion with it. The references to the writings of other men may be mere matters of detail,

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Registers (1554–1640), 4 vols., 1875–7.—Mr. Fleay, in Table IV of his Appendix, gives a list of all the entries concerning plays in the *Registers* from 1584 to 1640.

[1] These records of performances include the *Accounts of the Revels at Court*; but the whole of the evidence which they were stated to contain as to the production of particular Shaksperean plays has been conclusively discredited. There remains, however, the possibility of taking into account the evidence, *quantum valeat*, as to the dates of performances at Court by companies with which Shakspere was, or is held to have been, connected. Cf. Table III in Mr. Fleay's Appendix.) Records of performances at the Inns of Court, and at noblemen's houses, likewise come into consideration.

or may extend to an indebtedness on the part of the Shaksperean play for the whole or part of its plot, or for one or more of its characters. Allusions to things contemporary may be specially looked for, though not in the same measure as in the case of some other writers and periods of our dramatic literature in the *Prologues*, *Choruses*, and *Epilogues* of certain of Shakspere's plays [1].

(b) *Style and diction.*

(*b*) A comparison of the style and diction of the several plays may lead to conclusions as to their general order of sequence which to judicious minds will commend themselves as generally safe rather than infallibly correct. Particular characteristics of style, such as the excessive use of classical allusions—more especially, however, of such as do not betoken scholarship,—a superabundance of puns and conceits, and an occasional lapse into bombast and rant, may be held to mark a play as belonging to a relatively early period in the poet's literary career, while a late period will usually seem indicated by a pregnant method of writing, often leading to involution. But in both cases this test will of course be fallaciously applied, if the Shaksperean play in question be either the revision of an earlier dramatic composition by his own or another hand, or if it be the joint production of Shakspere and a collaborator. Many minor stylistic tests might without difficulty be devised or imagined [2].

(c) *Proportion of prose and verse.*

(*c*) A special test of diction may be the proportions of prose (if any) and verse in the play [3]. The largest amount of prose is unmistakeably found in the plays belonging to the middle period of Shakspere's dramatic productivity, as distinguished both from the earlier and from the later.

(d) *Versification.*

(*d*) A close study of the versification of the several plays will unmistakeably be of very signal assistance in determining their probable order of sequence. Under this head the following special tests will deserve to be applied, without being regarded as of equal value, or as either individually or collectively decisive:—

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[1] Cf. Stokes, *u. s.*, xii. and note.

[2] Including the use of particular words, phrases and constructions—such as both in writing and speaking men are prone to use with predilection in particular periods of their lives.

[3] I think it futile (in Shakspere's case) to add: the proportion of songs or lyric interspersions in the dialogue.

(*a*) *Rime.*

(*a*) The use of rime (except of course in songs or snatches of song interspersed in the plays). Where this is abundant, it may be regarded as an indication of an early date; and a progress from more to less rime may be held to accompany the general progress of Shakspere as a dramatic writer[1].

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[1] While the first edition of this work was passing through the press, the whole subject of this 'rime-test' was treated with a fulness and an accuracy alike unprecedented, by Mr. Fleay, in two papers *On Metrical Tests as applied to Dramatic Poetry*, with which the New Shakspere Society opened its *Transactions* (1874). They contained a Metrical Table of Shakspere's Plays, prefaced by a lucid exposition of Mr. Fleay's view of the value to be attached to the 'test' which he principally discusses. This Table gave the total numbers of lines, prose lines, blank verse lines, rimed five-measure lines (and lines of other measures, as well as lines with double endings); and in an Appendix Mr. Fleay showed the results of the Table in a briefer one, calculated on the principle of 'taking the rime lines in the *verse scenes* of each play, and dividing the number of blank verse lines by the number of rime lines, omitting all the rimes that occur in scenes which are with their exception written entirely *in prose*.' This seems an advisable limitation in the application of the 'test'; for it is certainly probable that it is in the scenes wholly in verse that a poet would more deliberately follow any particular tendency of this kind. Certain oddities of result apart (for which, as in the case of *Macbeth*, it is possible to suggest special reasons), the value of the 'rime-test' may in my opinion be held to be established to the following extent. It is one generally capable of fortifying conclusions which determine the arrangement of Shakspere's plays in periods or groups of chronological sequence—not necessarily the groups given by Mr. Fleay, but groups of this description. Even in these groups, however, if I understand Mr. Fleay rightly, it is necessary to remember 'that the Comedies, Chronicle Histories, and Tragedies should be considered separately, and that Shakspere advisedly used different styles in these three classes.' It seems to follow from this and other considerations, that with reference to the order of individual plays belonging to these periods or groups it would be rash, in determining their relative order of chronological sequence, to attach much weight to the relative number of rimed lines. And in no case should this or any other external test be allowed to outweigh other considerations of a more important character. I find it *e.g.* difficult to follow Mr. Fleay in assigning so comparatively late a place to *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, or in holding *Richard II* to have been written before *Richard III*. Allowing, however, for exceptions, the generally progressive nature of Mr. Fleay's Table is very striking, and confirms with remarkable force the conclusions arrived at on evidence of a different sort. It begins with *Love's Labour's Lost* (rime to blank verse as 1 to 6), and ends with *The Tempest* (1 to 729) and *The Winter's Tale* (1 to infinity; *i.e.* there are no rimed lines in the play).

(β) 'Stopped' and 'unstopped' lines.

(β) The proportion between what have been called 'stopped' and 'unstopped,' or 'running-on' lines. The use of this test is prejudiced by the difficulty of defining the not very felicitous epithets in question. A 'stopped' line is one in which the sentence, or clause of the sentence, concludes with the line; but it is not always possible to determine what is syntactically to be regarded as a new clause; and the 'stopping' of the sense is often of more importance than the 'stopping' of the sentence, with which it by no means necessarily coincides. Apart from this, it seems worth pointing out that the practice of excluding 'unstopped' lines. apparently due to the initiative of Marlowe, was waived by him in his later plays[1].

(γ) 'Feminine' endings.

(γ) The number of 'feminine' endings of lines, *i.e.* of lines ending with a redundant syllable[2] (or even, as however

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[1] As to Shakspere's plays, the general result of this test may be illustrated from Dr. Furnivall's table (*Leopold Shakspere*). With regard to the 'earliest' and 'latest' plays:

Proportion of unstopped to stopped lines:

Love's Labour's Lost	1 in 18	*Tempest*	1 in 3
Comedy of Errors	1 in 11	*Cymbeline*	1 in 2·5
Two Gentlemen of Verona	1 in 10	*Winter's Tale*	1 in 2

[2] The following list of the numbers of feminine endings in the several plays will be found in the Metrical Table compiled by Mr. Fleay, and already cited:

Love's Labour's Lost	9	*Timon*	267
Midsummer Night's Dream	29	*Henry V*	293
Merry Wives of Windsor	32	*Merchant of Venice*	297
King John	54	*Measure for Measure*	338
1 *Henry IV*	60	*Macbeth*	339
Romeo and Juliet	118	3 *Henry VI*	346
Pericles	123	*Julius Caesar*	369
Much Ado	129	*Troilus and Cressida*	441
Comedy of Errors	137	*Tempest*	476
1 *Henry VI*	140	*Hamlet*	508
Richard II	148	*King Lear*	567
Twelfth Night	152	*Richard III*	570
Titus Andronicus	154	*Anthony and Cleopatra*	613
2 *Henry IV*	203	*Winter's Tale*	639
Two Gentlemen of Verona	203	*Othello*	646
As you Like It	211	*Coriolanus*	708
All's Well	223	*Cymbeline*	726
2 *Henry VI*	255	*Henry VIII*	1195
Taming of the Shrew	260		

With regard to this list, it will of course be observed in the first place that any conclusions drawn from it as to the probable chronological sequence of is very rare in Shakspere, into two redundant syllables). The application of this test without further qualification cannot be regarded as establishing much more than the general conclusion, that while Shakspere employed double-endings sparingly in many of his plays that may on other

the plays must be modified by two considerations, as to which Mr. Fleay's Table likewise supplies the necessary information, viz. (1) the length of each play, and (2) the amount of prose contained in it. The former consideration would help in some measure to account *e.g.* for the position in the list of *Richard III* (3,599 lines in the play), which on other grounds must be placed far earlier, and the latter for that of *The Merry Wives* (2,723 lines in prose out of 3,099), which must probably be placed far later. Yet even if these circumstances be taken into account, many anomalies remain. The strange position of *Pericles* and *Titus Andronicus* will not astonish those who regard these plays as being only in part from Shakspere's hand; and the same reason may be held to account for the vagaries played in the list by the several Parts of *Henry VI.* The uncertainty as to the date of *The Taming of the Shrew* is not removed by the central position which it here occupies; but in the first instance the question has to be determined, to what extent Shakspere was the author of the version of this comedy attributed to him. The fallaciousness of the test in individual instances is illustrated by the nearness to one another in this list, as compared too with Mr. Fleay's rime-test list, of *Hamlet* and *Richard III* (plays of not very different length — 3,924 and 3,599 lines respectively), and still more by the discrepancy between its results in the case of the *First* and the *Second Part of Henry IV*, which can hardly have been written at any great distance of time from one another, and which contain (speaking roughly) about the same proportion of prose and verse, without differing very appreciably in length (the *Second Part* is rather longer, but contains rather more prose than the *First*).

On the other hand, the results as to the plays from *Julius Caesar* onwards (with the exception of *Richard III*) tally remarkably with conclusions based on other grounds. The case of *Henry VIII* is of course very peculiar; the abundance of feminine endings in this play has been traced by the large majority of critics to the supposed co-operation of Fletcher; and the late Mr. Spedding (in a paper contributed to *The Gentleman's Magazine*, August 1850, and reprinted in the *Transactions of the New Shakspere Society*) and Mr. Fleay have sought to divide the scenes in the play between Shakspere and Fletcher, not only according to the 'mental' test, but also according to this test of versification. Cf. below as to *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, which was actually published as the joint work of Shakspere and Fletcher.

As not unfrequently happens in scientific enquiries, Hertzberg engaged in investigations of the same kind as Mr. Fleay's, contemporaneously but independently. He regarded the increase of feminine endings in Shakspere's plays as regularly progressive, according to the dates of their composition; thus he found 15 *per cent.* in *The Merchant of Venice*, 32 in *The Tempest*, 44 in *Henry VIII.* Cf. K. Elze, *Die Abfassungszeit des Sturms*, in *Jahrbuch, &c.*, vol. viii (1872). The researches of Hertzberg, ten Brinck, and Dr. Furnivall, which proceed on a similar basis, concerning the chronology and authorship of some of the poems of Chaucer, or attributed to him, are well known.

grounds be regarded as early, he may be stated to have used them largely in all (or very nearly all) the plays that may on other grounds be assigned to a late period of his dramatic productivity.

(δ) *'Light' and 'weak' endings.*

(δ) In an interesting contribution to the question of Shaksperean verse-tests[1], two special kinds of endings of the verse, where the last syllable is a monosyllabic word, have been distinguished as 'light' and 'weak' endings —or as they may be called, enclitics and proclitics. The former consists chiefly of unemphatic auxiliaries, the latter chiefly of prepositions and conjunctions. The result deduced from this enquiry is that the last quarter, or thereabouts, of Shakspere's dramatic productivity is distinguished from the whole of the preceding period, in which he used the light endings very sparingly, and the weak hardly at all, by a very great increase in the number of the former, and a steady growth in that of the latter[2].

(ε) *Other verse-tests.*

(ε) To the above tests of versification others have been, and perhaps yet others may be, added, which whether applied to the plays as a whole, or to groups of them, or even to particular plays only, may fairly be regarded as contributory to establishing their probable chronological order or their approximate dates. Mr. Fleay has noticed (and tabulated) the gradual 'dying-out,' in what he designates as the second period of Shakspere's dramatic work, of the 'doggerel lines[3].'

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[1] By Dr. J. K. Ingram, in *Transactions of the New Shakspere Society*, vol. i. pp. 442 *seqq.* This paper contains a very interesting account of the general history of the verse-tests which have been applied to Shakspere.

[2] According to Dr. Ingram's Table, *Macbeth* is the first play in which an appreciable number of light endings (21) is to be found. In the later plays (apart from *Pericles*, *Henry VIII*, and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*) the reckoning stands thus:

Percentage of light and weak endings.

Anthony and Cleopatra	2·53	1
Coriolanus	2·34	1·71
Tempest	2·88	1·71
Cymbeline	2·90	1·93
Winter's Tale	3·12	2·36

[3] It had already struck Dr. Abbott (see his *Shakespeare Grammar*, edn. 1870, p. 407) that in the riming portions of the *Comedy of Errors* and *Love's Labour's Lost*, to both of which an early position among Shakspere's plays must on other grounds be ascribed, there is often great irregularity in the trimeter couplet, one half of a line differing in metre from the other.

stanzas, sonnets, and alternate rimes, which abound in the earliest group of plays. He has also compared the deviations which Shakspere permitted himself in his several plays from the ordinary five-foot measure of Elisabethan blank-verse; but unless, perhaps, in the case of the Alexandrines, of which the habit seems to have gained upon him when at the height of his dramatic labours without holding him afterwards[1], the registration of these more or less capricious variations seems to be little to the present purpose. More generally, it has been remarked that the freedom from a strict observance of the laws of metre to which Shakspere gradually attained was carried by him to the length of *incuria* in plays which are on other grounds reckoned as his latest; and that 'in some of the Roman plays and in *Henry VIII* he reaches the point of almost failing to mark his verse by caesura or by final pause[2].' The occurrence of broken lines—broken, that is to say, by the poet and not by the printer—may also call for consideration.

(d) 'Mental' tests.

(*d*) Finally, that highest and most comprehensive kind of criticism which seeks to take into account the entire mental growth of the poet, must attempt to form conclusions of its own respecting the order of Shakspere's plays. It will endeavour to trace in them the evidence of the artistic, which is inseparable from the ethical, progress of the writer—in construction and in characterisation, in taste, in depth of humour and pathos, in self-control and self-restraint, in moral purpose, in power and concentration of thought. It will also try to find in them the reflexion of his views, changing as they must change in all intelligent minds with the advance of time and experience, concerning life and death, time and eternity. It will be wise if it abstains from pressing the conclusions to which it may attain on such points too closely, or from insisting on them too masterfully. It will lean, so far as may be worth its while, upon such biographical knowledge concerning Shakspere as is actually at its service, and upon intelligent and even imaginative conjecture so far as these can be conscientiously accepted as convincing. General historical criticism will lend its aid towards a just estimate of the influence of a particular time perceptible in particular plays; general literary criticism will contribute its indications of literary influences to which at particular periods the poet may appear to have been more especially subject. Since certain of the plays were undeniably written at an earlier date than certain others, arguments from analogy may, from an almost infinite number of points of view, be applied to any number of plays in the list. In the same way, there will in many cases be sure grounds for concluding that two or more particular plays belong to the same period in the poet's career and developement. But it should never be forgotten that play-writing was to Shakspere a profession by which he earned his bread as well as an art through which he was to reap his fame, and that the former point of view may sufficiently account for juxtapositions which from the other may seem intolerable incongruities. Evidence as to the date of a play must be received or rejected for what it is worth; but if, for instance, we find Shakspere to all appearance turning from gay comedy to the delineation of tragic character, it is only the pedantry of criticism which will cry Impossible! On the other hand, no evidence of a merely formal kind must be allowed to outweigh conclusive poetic proofs of a higher value; no mere versification test *e.g.* shall induce us to date a manifestly early historical drama as late as a tragedy presenting in its existing form the perfection of Shakspere's tragic art.

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[1] They are most frequent, according to Mr. Fleay's Table, in the 'Tragedies of the Third Period.'—I have not been able to see K. Elze's *Alexandrines in The Winter's Tale and King Richard II*, of which sixty copies only were (privately) printed.

[2] Grant White, *u.s.*, pp. 244, 245. This partly coincides with the 'running-on' and weak or light ending tests. Mr. Fleay has also called attention to the practice of allowing a redundant syllable in the middle of the verse.

It only needs to be added that the application of these tests will be subject to difficulties of a special kind, where there is reason of an external or internal sort for supposing any particular play to be a revision or reproduction of an earlier work either by Shakspere himself or by another hand, or where there are *primâ facie* grounds for the belief that the play as it stands was not written by Shakspere alone.

The reader will, I am assured, not for a moment hold me guilty of the presumption of pretending to have systematically applied all or most of the tests which I have enumerated in drawing up the following list. I have simply applied such of them as it was in my power to apply with the aid of the authorities within my reach; and in many cases I have felt doubts not less grave than the reader himself may feel as to the justice of my conclusions[1].

Shakspere's plays.

Titus Andronicus(?).

(1) TITUS ANDRONICUS † A. 1594. E. 1594. M. P. 1600.

Shakspere's authorship of the body of this play has been doubted or disputed by Theobald, Farmer, Malone, Steevens, Coleridge (who remarked on the general unlikeness of the blank-verse to

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[1] In the following list the Roman numerals, followed by letters (thus: I a), denote the period and the subdivision of such period to which a play is assigned by Dr. Furnivall in the Introduction to the Leopold Shakspere. These periods, four in number, and the subdivisions in each, imply chronological sequence; with Dr. Furnivall's nomenclature for these periods I have no concern. (With this grouping may be usefully compared Dr. Furnivall's Metre and Date Table, *ib.* p. cxxiii, and Professor Dowden's interesting grouping, reprinted by Dr. Furnivall on the following page.)

The abbreviation *Mal.*, followed by an Arabic numeral (thus: *Mal.* 1), denotes the place assigned by Malone to any particular play in the section of his *Life of Shakspeare* (*Variorum* edn., 1821) entitled 'An Attempt to ascertain the Order in which the Plays of Shakspeare were written.' Malone and Furnivall, compared together, may be taken as sufficiently illustrating the progress of the enquiry which the former was the first to attempt on an elaborate scale.

The obelisk (†) denotes that Shakspere's authorship of any particular play, or of any considerable portion of it, is regarded as at least doubtful by a virtual *consensus* of recent criticism.

The capital M signifies that the play was mentioned by Meres in his *Palladis Tamia* (1598).

The capital A, with date appended, marks the year of the first performance of a play, as established on undisputed evidence; the capital E, with date appended, the year in which it was first entered in the Stationers' Registers; and the capital P, with date appended, the year of the earliest extant printed edition.

The several Parts of *Henry VI* and *Henry IV* have in each case been kept together in my list.

In the dates of years, I have throughout (unless an oversight should here and there have occurred) adopted New Style for the sake of convenience.

Shakspere's), Drake, Dyce, Hallam, and a virtually unanimous chorus of recent English critics. On the other hand, it was accepted as a genuine Shaksperean play by Collier and Knight, as well as by Ulrici and Delius; and two German scholars, H. Kurz (*Zu Titus Andronicus* in *Jahrbuch*, &c., vol. v., 1870) and A. Schroer (*Über Titus Andronicus. Zur Kritik der neuesten Shakespeare-Forschung* (Marburg, 1881); cited by Dr. Grosart, *u.i.*), have devoted special essays to a defence of the same position. The solution to which Gervinus seems to incline, that in this play we have only an older piece elaborated by Shakspere, would be too vague to call for consideration, but for an early stage-tradition concerning this play handed down by Edward Ravenscroft in the preface to his adaptation of it, entitled *Titus Andronicus, or the Rape of Lavinia*. This tradition asserts that *Titus Andronicus* was brought by 'a private author' to be acted, and received from Shakspere 'only some master-touches to one or two of the principal parts or characters.' Many suggestions have been made as to which may be these 'touches' or patches; Mr. Fleay thinks Shakspere had no hand in the play, unless possibly he inserted act iii. sc. 2; a longer list of passages assignable to him was suggested by Mr. H. B. Wheatley (*New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1874, pp. 126-9), who inclined to demur to Mr. Fleay's conclusion that 'no one among sane English critics believes the play to be Shakspere's'; and I had independently marked out for myself as passages bearing the recognisable impress of Shakspere's hand, Tamora's speech in act i. sc. 1, Lavinia's in act ii. sc. 3 (where the bird-simile might have suggested Peele, could any trust be reposed in such 'marks'), Tamora's in act iv. sc. 4, and—though less confidently—parts at least of act iii. sc. 1, and Lucius' speech to his boy in act v. sc. 3. If, by the way, the play were Shakspere's, some biographical significance might be held to attach to Aaron's sneer in act v. sc. 1, against 'popish tricks and ceremonies.'

Some critics have gone so far as to conjecture, with more or less of hesitation, what other dramatist was the author of the body of this orphan play. Already Farmer suggested Kyd, and the supposition is allowed by Mr. Fleay to be worth considering. Such a scene as act v. sc. 2, where Tamora personates Revenge with her sons standing by her side as Rape and Murder, has an old-fashioned air which recalls the author of *Jeronimo* and *The Spanish Tragedy*. (See the reference to *Bartholomew Fair* below.) Mr. Fleay's own judgment, however, is in favour of Marlowe's authorship; 'what other mind,' he asks, 'but the author of *The Jew of Malta* could have conceived Aaron the Moor?' The conception of a villain, the blackness of whose character is unrelieved or all but unrelieved (Aaron has, however, a kind of tenderness for his black baby), is certainly uncommon in Shakspere; Mr. Fleay, as will be seen below, thinks *Richard III* to have been largely Marlowe's, and it was unmistakeably written under his influence. Quite recently, Dr. Grosart, in an ingenious essay (*Was Robert Greene substantially the author of Titus Andronicus?* in *Englische Studien*, Leipzig, 1896), has elaborated the supposition that the 'private author' (as distinguished from actors or public playwrights) who wrote this tragedy was Robert Greene. The most striking argument in support of this conclusion is based on the fact, that a very considerable element in the vocabulary of *Titus Andronicus*, not to be found in undoubted Shaksperean plays (already Mr. Fleay had given a list of not less than 121 such words and phrases), can be matched from the writings of Greene. The species, or manner, of classical allusion habitual to that writer likewise re-appears here; and Dr. Grosart further urges that the blood and horrors of *Titus Andronicus*, while not Shaksperean, are quite in Greene's way, and may be found very closely paralleled in the tragedy of *Selimus*, which he holds to be Greene's (cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 405). At the same time, it should be pointed out that the scene in the forest (act ii. sc. 3), where Aaron's loathsome devices are carried out, has a gloomy picturesqueness beyond Greene's powers. On the whole, I should not care to decide whether large parts of this play were written by Marlowe, or by so great a *virtuoso* in imitation as Greene; but the evidence of vocabulary favours the latter hypothesis. In any case, no 'terms' could be more 'high-astounding' than those which abound in this tragedy; several of its characters besides Titus Andronicus might have with good warrant been entreated by his brother Marcus to

'Speak with possibilities,
And [not to] break into these deep extremes.'
(Act iii. sc. 1.)

A curiously complex contribution to the problem arises out of the passage in Demetrius's speech (act ii. sc. 1):—

'She is a woman, therefore may be woo'd;
She is a woman, therefore may be won,'—

taken together with the parallel passages in *Part I* of *Henry VI*, act v. sc. 3, in *Richard III*, act i. sc. 2, in *Sonnet* xli, and in

Greene's prose-writings, where, moreover, Dr. Grosart has pointed out the occurrence in juxtaposition of the word *achieve*, which so closely precedes Demetrius' antithesis. There seems no proof that the phrase had an early proverbial vogue; but I cannot perceive any necessity for crediting Greene with its invention.

A '*tittus and ondronicus*' is mentioned in Henslowe's *Diary* as a 'new' play acted January 23, 1594, by the Earl of Sussex's players, and an *Andronicus* as acted June 5 and 12 of the same year. Henslowe likewise mentions the performance by Lord Strange's company, as a new play on April 11, 1591, and on several subsequent occasions, of a piece which he calls *Tittus and Vespacia*. Of the latter no copy remains; nor is there any evidence that it was identical with that printed among the *Engelische Comoedien vnd Tragedien* (plays acted in Germany by the English Comedians) in 1620, under the title (translated) of *A most lamentable Tragedy of Titus Andronicus and the Haughty Empress, wherein are found memorable events*, and reprinted by Tieck and by A. Cohn (*Shakespeare in Germany*, pp. 157 *seqq.*)—except that in the German piece a noble Roman of the name of Vespasian makes his appearance, who becomes Emperor at the close. At the same time, Malone's conjecture that the proper title of the 1591 play was *Titus Vespasian*, is not particularly seductive.

Whether the German play, which contains a large number of dramatic personages besides Vespasian, was founded upon the extant *Titus Andronicus*, or upon another play on the same subject, or (as it is not easy to believe) upon the *Titus and Vespacia* of 1591, we lack the means for determining. Nor are we entitled to assume with certainty that '*the booke intituled a Noble Roman Historye of Tytus Andronicus*,' entered, together with 'the ballad thereof' (*i.e.* a ballad on the same subject), on the Stationers' Registers on February 6, 1594, was identical with the play which we now possess, and which was printed in 1600. It is true that Langlaine professed to have seen a copy of the edition of 1594, professing to print the play as acted by the sonnets of the Earls of Derby, Pembroke, and Essex (a slip for 'Sussex'); but this is not absolutely decisive. If the ballad was that reprinted in Percy's *Reliques* from an undated collection, supposed to be of earlier date than the Shaksperean play, entitled *The Golden Garland of Princely Delights*, this would add probability to the supposition of a different or rival dramatic version of the theme. On April 19, 1602, a book called *Titus and Andronicus* was entered on the Registers; but here again we are without information as to whether this was the play known as Shakspere's.

The story of Titus Andronicus is referred to by Paynter in his *Palace of Pleasure*, vol. ii (1567), and in the play of *A Knack to know a Knave* (1594). In the Induction to *Bartholomew Fair* (1614) Ben Jonson speaks of *Titus Andronicus* as a play which, like *Jeronimo*, dates 'these twenty-five or thirty years' since. This, if taken literally, would carry the date of its production back to 1589 or an earlier year.

Edward Ravenscroft's *Titus Andronicus, or the Rape of Lavinia*, was acted in 1678, but not printed till 1687. Its author boasted that none of Shakspere's works had 'ever received greater alterations or additions.'—The subject of Wilson's *Andronicus Comnenius* (1664), and that of a previous anonymous play treating the same story (*Andronicus*, 1661), have of course no connexion with that of the play attributed to Shakspere.

Henry VI (?).

(2) HENRY VI. PART I. † Id. *Mal.* 1. P. 1623.
(3) „ PART II. † Id. *Mal.* 1. E. 1594? P. 1594?
(4) „ PART III. † Id. *Mal.* 1. E. 1595? P. 1595?

It will be most convenient to treat of these three plays under their collective title, without thereby implying any foregone conclusion as to the authorship of any one or more of them. As will immediately appear, the arguments on this head stand to a large extent on a different basis with regard to the *Second* and *Third*, and with regard to the *First*, *Parts* respectively.

The *First Part* was, so far as is known, first published in the Folio of 1623. In Henslowe's *Diary*, a play called by him successively *Henery the VI* and *Hary VI* is noticed as performed on March 3, 1592 (*N. S.*), and repeated at least fifteen times between that date and January 31, 1593. In his *Pierce Pennilesse* (1592) Nashe alludes to a play in which 'brave Talbot (the terror of the French)' was, 'after he had lain two hundred years in his tomb,' made to 'triumph again on the stage, and have his bones new embalmed with the tears of ten thousand spectators at least (at several times).' This might of course have referred to *Part I* of the *Henry VI* attributed to Shakspere, but there is no evidence to identify the latter either with the play which Nashe had in his mind, or with the popular play acted for Henslowe by Lord Strange's men. Nothing was more common in the Elisabethan age of the theatre—as indeed in subsequent ages—than for a theatre to produce plays on the subjects which had proved successful under dramatic treatment at a rival house.

The *Second* and *Third Parts of Henry VI* were likewise first printed in their present form in the First Folio, their titles running respectively *The second part of King Henry the Sixt, with the death of the Good Duke Humfrey*, and *The third part of King Henry the Sixt, with the death of the Duke of Yorke.* There can be no doubt as to the close connexion between these two plays, and two others entitled respectively, the one, *The First Part of the Contention betwixt the Two famous houses of Yorke and Lancaster, with the death of the good Duke Humphrey; And the banishment and death of the Duke of Suffolke, and the Tragicall end of the proud Cardinall of Winchester, with the notable Rebellion of Iacke Cade: And the Duke of Yorke's first claime vnto the Crowne;* and the other, *The true Tragedie of Richard Duke of Yorke, and the death of good King Henry the Sixt, with the whole Contention betweene the two Houses Lancaster and Yorke, as it was sundrie times acted by the Right Honourable the Earle of Pembroke his seruants.* Both these plays were printed for the same bookseller, Thomas Millington, in 1594 and 1595 respectively, the former having been entered in the Stationers' Registers on March 12, 1594. Millington reprinted them in 1600. In 1602 another bookseller, Thomas Pavier, entered in the Registers by assignment from Thomas Millington *The First and Second Parts of Henry VI;* and in 1619 Pavier published in a single volume *The whole Contention betweene the two Famous Houses, Lancaster and Yorke, with the Tragicall ends of the good Duke Humfrey, Richard Duke of Yorke, and King Henrie the Sixt, divided into two Parts: And newly corrected and enlarged. Written by William Shakespeare, Gent.* This edition contains some modifications of the texts of 1594 and 1595 (and 1600), without however coming near to the texts of *Part II* and *Part III* as printed in the First Folio. Finally, in 1623, Blount and Jaggard, who were among the publishers of the First Folio, entered in the Registers *The Thirde Parte of Henry the Sixt,*—obviously the play now known as *The First Part.* (Of *The Contention* and *The True Tragedie* reprints are to be found in the (old) *Shakespeare Society's Publications*, 1843, edited by Halliwell-Phillipps, under the title of *First Sketches of the Second and Third Parts of King Henry VI*, and in *The Cambridge Shakespeare*, vol. v.)

There is no reference to *Henry VI* in the list of Shakspere's plays given by Meres (1598),—a fact the more notable inasmuch as he mentions *Titus Andronicus* ('a booke' under which name was entered on the Registers by Pavier on April 19, 1602, together with '*the first and second parte of Henry the VI^{t}*' as assigned to him by Millington).

In the still-vext passage which has been previously cited (see *ante*, vol. i. pp. 382–3 *et al.*) from the *Groatsworth of Wit* (1592), Greene addressing Marlowe, Peele, and a third '*quondam* acquaintance' and fellow-playwright, variously supposed to have been Lodge or Nashe (without, however, in this particular passage seeming to single out any one of the three), says: 'Trust them [the players] not; for there is an upstart crow beautified with our feathers, that with his tygres heart wrapt up in a player's hide supposes hee is as well able to bombaste out a blank verse as the best of you; and being an absolute Johannes fac totum is, in his own conceit, the only Shake-scene in a country.' The pun leaves no doubt as to Shakspere's being aimed at; and the phrase about the 'tygres heart' is a manifest parody of the line

> 'O tyger's heart, wrapt in a woman's hide,'

which occurs in *The True Tragedie* (sc. iii) and in the *Third Part of Henry VI* (act i. sc. 4), whither the speech of which it forms part is almost textually transferred. Although the sarcasm in this passage, as a whole, seems to be directed against the player, some special intention may have underlain the quotation which is used to bring it home; and there can be no doubt but that the force of the invective would have gained very greatly from the fact (if it was such) that the particular 'blank verse' parodied was known to be Shakspere's own. Still, the parody may quite conceivably have been introduced, more or less by accident, merely by way of allusion to a familiar stage phrase of the day. Chettle's reference in his *Kind Harts Dreame* to Greene's attack proves it to have been deeply resented by Shakspere; but Chettle, who had given publicity to the charge, neither withdraws it nor implies that there was in it anything to withdraw. In a vaguer but still very significant way, and apparently alluding to Greene's own attack upon Shakspere, a writer signing himself 'R. B.,' after Greene's death declared him to have been the victim of plagiarism (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 407).

On the above external evidence, and on the internal evidence to be found in the three Parts of *Henry VI*, and in the two old plays of which the *Second* and *Third Part* were to all intents and purposes revised versions, or to be deduced from a comparison of these plays with one another and with the known plays of Shakspere, Marlowe, Peele, Greene, and Lodge at large, are founded the various theories that have been put forth as to the authorship of *Henry VI*.

Although some measure of assumption may seem involved in the order of procedure, those more recent critics whose arguments on this difficult problem—the *crux* κατ' ἐξοχήν of modern Shakspere-criticism—seem to be most deserving of attention have been well-advised in considering the question of the authorship of the *First Part* to be most conveniently treated as subsequent, and in a sense subsidiary, to that of the authorship of the *Second* and *Third Parts*. For, with regard to the latter, the main argument largely turns on their relation to two other extant plays, while in the case of the *First Part* no such basis offers itself from which to start. Accordingly in his *Essay on the Authorship of King Henry the Sixth* (printed in vol. vii. of his edition of *The Works of William Shakespeare*, Boston, U.S.A., 1859), the late Mr. Grant White, after reviewing the slender external evidence on the whole subject, examined at length the question of the authorship of the *Second* and *Third Parts*, appending a much briefer enquiry as to the authorship of the *First Part*, and Mr. G. L. Rives, who in his *Harness Prize Essay* on the same subject (Cambridge, 1874) summarised and adopted the views of the eminent American scholar (see Grant White's posthumous *Studies in Shakespeare*, London, 1885, pp. 21–2), more compendiously followed the same method. Mr. Fleay, in his remarkable paper, *Who wrote Henry VI?* (*Macmillan's Magazine*, November, 1875) substantially followed the same order of procedure, although taking a line, and arriving at conclusions, of his own. These conclusions are repeated in the chapter on *The Marlowe Group of Plays* in his *Life of Shakespeare*. Lastly, Miss Jane Lee's paper *On the Authorship of the Second and Third Parts of Henry VI and their Originals* (*New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1875–6), while containing what may confidently be described as the most exhaustive treatment that has as yet been applied to the subject, does not concern itself with the question of the authorship of *Part I*.

If, then, we enquire in the first instance into the authorship of *Parts II* and *III*, we must begin by discussing that of the two old plays of which they are modified versions, or (as has been more rarely held) which are themselves modified or mutilated versions of *Parts I* and *II*. The latter theory is that advanced by Mr. Fleay, who holds that the *Contention* (as I will call it for shortness' sake) and the *True Tragedie* consisted of surreptitious fragments taken down in short-hand at theatrical performances, and patched up by some inferior hack, hired to write additions, or by some strutting player, who interpolated bits of sensation for the groundlings.' I cannot but agree with Miss Lee in demurring to two very improbable consequences which seem to flow from this theory, viz., first, that the compilers of the *Contention* and the *True Tragedie* were so unlucky as to miss, or so witless as intentionally to leave out, many of the finest passages in the two plays which they 'conveyed'; and, furthermore, that they contrived to reproduce their originals in what is, on the whole, unmistakeably a more antique form of versification. On the other hand, I fail to perceive that the addition of 'much new and poor matter,'—surely no very unusual practice with hand-to-mouth adapters in any age,—tells against Mr. Fleay's view; and the external evidence on the question of priority must be allowed to be unsatisfactory either way, if (as I confess I feel obliged to do) we decline to interpret Greene's attack upon Shakspere as a distinct charge of literary plagiarism in connexion with the play from which it contains a parodied quotation. If, on the other hand, the allusion is so interpreted, the supposition would obviously be absurd that Greene should have accused of plagiarism a dramatist whom he had himself co-operated in plagiarising. (Cf. Rives, p. 30, referring to Lettsom's belief that 'the two parts of the *Whole Contention* were copies of genuine plays of Shakspeare surreptitiously obtained by Lord Pembroke's players'; and see Grant White, p. 457, as to the supposition which had occurred to him, that the two old plays 'were written by Shakspere for the Blackfriars Theatre' (?) 'and obtained so much money and applause that the Earl of Pembroke's Company sought to procure them for their own use . . . and did procure them in a much mutilated form, which Greene and Marlowe were employed hastily to patch up, partly from memory, and partly by their own invention.')

Assuming, then, as on the whole most probable, the priority of the *Contention* and the *True Tragedie* as compositions to *Parts II* and *III* of *Henry VI*, we are next confronted by the question as to the authorship of the earlier two plays. The view that they were entirely by Shakspere was impugned before Malone, but neither attacked nor defended with much weight of argument. After Malone had delivered the first elaborate assault upon the position, an uncompromising champion of its correctness was found in the late Charles Knight, who, however, remained isolated in this respect among later English critics. The later German critics, in accordance with the traditions of their Romanticist predecessors, showed greater faith. Ulrici as late as 1864 (see *Jahrbuch*, vol. i. p. 85) avowed his belief that these plays constituted 'the first youthful endeavours of Shakspere in the field of the historical drama,—the first sketches for the trilogy of *Henry VI*;' but he concluded that 'in the earliest impressions they have come down to us only in a mutilated and corrupt condition.' Delius, too, adhered to much the same judgment, although willing to account for the imperfection of the compositions, as printed, by supposing them to have been obtained by the piratical publisher from actors, and possibly manipulated by some 'subordinate' poet for the purposes of publication.

In direct opposition to this view stands that first elaborated by Malone, whose *Dissertation*, annexed to the *Second* and *Third Parts* in his edition of Shakspere (reprinted in vol. xviii. of the *Variorum* of 1821) was designed to prove that the *Contention* and the *True Tragedie* 'were written by some writer or writers who preceded Shakspeare, and moulded by him, with many alterations and additions, into the shape in which they appear in his works under the title of *The Second and Third Parts of King Henry VI*.' (In his *Dissertation* Malone hazarded the conjecture that the writer in question was the author of the old *King John*, printed in 1591; but he afterwards altered his opinion, and concluded that the *True Tragedie* certainly, and the *Contention* perhaps also, were the work of Marlowe. See *Order of Plays, &c.*, in *Variorum* edition, vol. ii. p. 314.) The view according to which Shakspere had no concern in any part of the two early plays was likewise taken by Drake, Hallam, Harness, Collier, and Dyce, and is now held by Mr. Fleay, Dr. Furnivall, and Miss Lee. The external evidence in favour of this conclusion is strong, but not absolutely convincing. The second of the plays must certainly have been before the public in 1592, or Greene could not in that year have distinctly alluded to a line occurring in it. In 1595 the *True Tragedie* was printed as acted by Lord Pembroke's men, and in 1600 both the plays were still in the possession of that company, with which Shakspere never had any connexion. Nor (although this is not conclusive) were they ascribed to Shakspere by the piratical publisher till he printed them under the title of *The Whole Contention* in 1619. All this in a measure corroborates the interpretation which has been so frequently put upon the passage in the *Groatsworth of Wit*, but which, as I have already stated, I feel myself unable to accept. In itself, the internal evidence, so far as it turns upon the general character and style of the two plays, without absolutely excluding the possibility that they were fashioned by Shakspere as a beginner, tells against any such assumption. On the other hand, in these plays certain scenes and passages unmistakeably stand out from the rest. The question whether anybody but Shakspere could have written these scenes and passages has necessarily to be argued in connexion with the claims which have been urged on behalf of certain other dramatists as authors of the plays in question.

The third, or what has been called the middle, view as to the authorship of these old plays is that favoured by Halliwell-Phillipps, Staunton, and notably by Grant White, according to which Shakspere, though not the sole author of these plays, had a share in their composition. This supposition, it will be observed, involves scarcely fewer difficulties with regard to Shakspere's theatrical history than that of his sole authorship, while it calls upon us to recognise in the differences between the *Second* and *Third Parts of Henry VI* and the two old plays the revision of a writer whose hand had been already busy upon these in a merely co-ordinate capacity. Halliwell-Phillipps, if I may so say, took refuge in the supposition of yet earlier plays, out of which the labours of Shakspere and his associates formed the *Contention* and the *True Tragedie*; but of any such we know nothing. Grant White, like the most prominent among the opponents of the view upheld by him (with the exception, in some measure, of Mr. Fleay), rests his case on internal evidence only, though within this limit he also has resort to hypothesis. Are there, then, any scenes, parts, or passages in the two old plays of which it can be asserted with confidence, or with any reasonable approach to confidence, that at the time—by 1592—nobody but Shakspere could have written them? Every reader of the plays will, in the first instance, think of the scenes in the *Contention* (xiii–xx) in which Jack Cade is the chief figure, and of which no less an authority on everything that concerns style than Mr. Swinburne has written that 'their forcible realism, their simple and life-like humour, can scarcely be ascribed to any hand but Shakspere's.' (*Fortnightly Review*, January 1876, cited by Miss Lee.) Dr. Furnivall, too, rather tremulously concludes that 'it cannot be certain that Shakspere had no share in the original sketch of Jack Cade.' (*Leopold Shakspere. Introduction*, p. xxxviii.) Now, I frankly confess that my difficulty with regard to these scenes which, doubtless by reason of their humorous excellence, were 'worked up' with great care of detail by the author of the *Second Part*, is by no means that put forward by Miss Lee. She cannot bring herself to believe that Shakspere in his youth could have originated scenes whose comedy reveals so much knowledge of the world and men, and so penetrating and critical an insight into their foibles. To my mind the difficulty rather lies in the question, Who could have written these scenes if Shakspere did not? The criterion is to be sought, not so much in the strength of their humour or in its style—for Peele might conceivably have reached the former, while Greene's imitative faculty might have carried him outside the artificial sphere in which he was most at home—as in the masterly combination of satirical with purely humorous force. Still, I for one am not prepared to assert, as 'humanly speaking' the only possible solution, that the Jack Cade scenes in the *Contention* are from Shakspere's hand. I find it, indeed, still more difficult to attribute to any other authorship than his certain other passages in the two old plays, where, in Grant White's felicitous words, 'thought, diction and rhythm sprang up together to flow in a consentaneous stream.' He instances, as the first sustained passage to which such a phraseology is applicable, that in sc. x. of the *Contention*, beginning with Warwick's speech—

'Who sees a heifer dead and bleeding fresh.'

Miss Lee quotes, as in acceptance of the implied challenge, passages from Marlowe 'as beautiful and as thoughtful'; but she appears to miss the point that these latter can hardly be said to 'spring up,' fusing as it were spontaneously high qualities of style into the essence of fine dramatic dialogue. No doubt, the assumption that Shakspere combined with others in the composition of the two old plays, renders it more difficult to explain the differences between these plays and *Parts II* and *III*—differences which are of a peculiar nature and include matters of fact as well as of style—as due to a revision of the former by a writer who had been previously busy in them to comparatively little purpose. I attach less importance to the circumstance that Shakspere's name was not connected with the old plays till their republication in 1609, or to the other that they were substantially founded on Hall, whereas Shakspere's dramas from English history were, as a rule, founded on Holinshed. All these difficulties are not decisive. Antecedent to them, and even to that of supposing Shakspere to have collaborated with others in the service of a company for which he is not known to have written, is the question whether the internal evidence to be found in the two old plays points to the participation of any other known writers in their composition. Practically, the only writers in dispute are Marlowe, Greene, Peele, and perhaps Lodge and Nashe, though on behalf of neither of the last two has any serious claim been advanced. Already Malone attempted to show that Greene, or Peele, or both, were the author or authors of these plays, as well as of the old *King John*, printed in 1591; afterwards, he came to think that Marlowe wrote the last-named play. Marlowe's undisputed 'chief incursion into the English historical drama,' as Miss Lee calls his *Edward II*, must have been acted in 1592 or 1593, when it was entered in the Stationers' Registers. The metrification of this tragedy is manifestly different from that of the two old plays which, if written by him in whole or in part, must therefore belong to an earlier date. In the depiction of vehement passion, there is, however, much in the two old plays which bears a stronger resemblance and relationship to his writing than to that of any other known contemporary author; but Mr. Fleay must be allowed to have made a strong point in favour of the authorship of Peele (who had 'humour in his composition') as against Marlowe's in the case of the humorous scenes. Although the resemblances between particular lines in the old plays and in Marlowe (more especially in his *Edward II*, as pointed out by Dyce, Mr. Fleay, and Miss Lee) are such as to make it impossible in common candour to dismiss them as accidental, on the other hand similar resemblances (though fewer in number) have been noticed in the plays of Greene, and a peculiar grammatical construction which may almost be regarded as a 'mark' of the latter, though it also occurs, but less frequently, in Marlowe ('for to' with an infinitive), is to be found nine times in the two old plays, and only four times in the whole of Shakspere's undisputed works. Other resemblances of diction and construction have been found between the old plays and Marlowe and Greene respectively; but though I shall certainly not be so presumptuous as to assert, after what Miss Lee and others have written on the subject, that no one 'capable of judging of differences of styles' is likely to attribute to Greene a share in the composition of the two old plays, I must re-assert my impression that the general effect of their style is not that of Greene's. (I need not dwell on the circumstance that in accounting for her astonishment at such a conclusion Miss Lee draws largely upon *George-a-Greene*, which after all cannot be proved to have been Greene's handiwork.) The result seems on the whole to be that, with a measure of probability varying in each case, Marlowe in the first instance, Greene in the second, and possibly also Peele, may be held to have been concerned in the writing of the two old plays. I am unable to escape from the belief, in which I am corroborated by Halliwell-Phillipps and the editors of the *Cambridge Shakespeare*, that Shakspere had an incidental share in them when they were first composed, or (as is perhaps more likely) that passages in the impressions of 1594 and 1595 of the two old plays were borrowed for use from the *Second* and *Third Parts*, as then performed on the stage. Neither of these hypotheses can be pronounced absolutely necessary, though the conclusion seems all but inevitable that one or the other of them is correct. Neither hypothesis is free from difficulties; but these difficulties cannot be held decisive, since the most serious of them lies in a conflict with the present state of our knowledge of Shakspere's theatrical history,—which, after all, cannot pretend to be final.—A rather lame and perhaps impotent conclusion, I allow, but in my opinion preferable to brilliant attempts at discriminating between entire strands in the thread as assignable to particular writers. Grant White ingeniously suggested that Shakspere undertook the parts of Clifford and Warwick, which (as I cannot here go into details) may be said to have been almost entirely carried over into *Henry VI*, and Mr. Rives is emboldened to consider 'the Queen's character Shakespeare's in both plays, though but little of her part is left untouched in *Henry VI*.' Miss Lee, who thinks that 'Marlowe took certain characters, Greene took certain others,' but that they also each took particular scenes, prudently allows it to be impossible to decide, 'with regard to every passage in the play, whether it was written by the one or the other dramatist.'

We stand, as it seems to me, on firmer ground in discussing the question of the authorship of the *Second* and *Third Parts* of *Henry VI* themselves. The point at issue is not the responsibility for a few additions and changes, but the authorship of nearly half of the two *Parts*. Grant White calculates that of 5,934 lines contained in them 3,410 were founded on the text of the two earlier plays. 1,479 being taken from the 3,057 of the *Contention*, and 1,931 from the 2,877 of the *True Tragedie*. On the other hand, in the conduct of the action, the first three acts of *Part III* and the whole of *Part II* exhibit no important variation from the *True Tragedie* and the *Contention* respectively. But the general character of the versification of *Parts I* and *II* is in advance of that of the two plays;

and, as Miss Lee has shown with remarkable critical acumen and force (aided in the important instance of the lines inserted at the opening of sc. 3 of *Part III*, act iv, by the suggestion of Malone), the improvements introduced in the enlarged version by additions, omissions and alterations alike, amount to a thorough renewal of the whole. In addition, *Parts II* and *III* exhibit (to use Malone's phraseology) transpositions and repetitions, and inconsistencies which are most easily explained by the supposition of a reviser or adapter, who sometimes adhered to, and at other times departed from, his originals. Unless, therefore, it should prove possible, which I am not prepared to admit, to account for these variations by such an inversion of the argument as has been proposed by Mr. Fleay, and to regard the *Contention* and the *True Tragedie* as garbled and impoverished stage-versions of superior originals, we must at once ask ourselves by what agency so notable a transformation was effected.

Could this agency have been Shakspere's, as was so roundly asserted by the tradition to which the editors of the First Folio gave their *imprimatur?* Such was the opinion of Malone, who, as has been seen, thought that Shakspere had no share in the two plays which he re-shaped, and such has been the opinion of the large majority of later Shakspere-scholars, whether like Malone, Collier, Gervinus and Ingleby they have held Shakspere to have had no share in the composition of the two earlier plays, or whether like Halliwell-Phillipps and the Cambridge Editors, whom, although not without hesitation, I prefer to follow, they incline to think that he contributed to them. Grant White is of the same opinion, and goes so far as to conclude that Shakspere transferred into *Parts II* and *III* all that he had contributed to the *Contention*, and, in a much larger proportion, to the superior *True Tragedie.* Miss Lee, the thoroughness of whose researches on the subject entitles her opinion to exceptional weight, has however come to the conclusion that the 'reformed and revised' version of the earlier plays was due to collaboration between Marlowe and Shakspere; and Mr. Fleay, as has been seen, considers that Shakspere had no share in *Parts II* and *III* of *Henry VI*, but that they were the work of Marlowe in conjunction with Kyd, Greene, Peele and Lodge (who had already collaborated with him in *Part I*).

The view that Shakspere was the dramatic poet who transformed the two old plays into *Parts I* and *II*, has in its favour the tradition which (even if we are not to assume certain knowledge on their part) caused Heminge and Condell to include the two latter plays in the First Folio; against it there remains standing the twofold fact that the plays remodelled by him were acted by a company with which he had no concern, and that the versions supposed to have been made by him are not known to have been acted by his own company. These objections—and that of the omission by Meres of any notice of the revised plays as Shakspere's—cannot be considered conclusive; on the other hand they cannot be fairly held to be refuted by a passage in the *Epilogue* to *Henry V* (printed in 1600, and of course indisputably Shakspere's), in which the poet has been very generally held to refer to the popularity of (at least two) plays previously performed on the subject treated in the *Three Parts* of *Henry VI.* The lines which include this passage run as follows:

'Henry the Sixth, in infant bands crown'd King
  Of France and England, did this king succeed,
Whose state so many had the managing
  That they lost France and made his England bleed;
Which oft our stage hath shown; and, *for their sake,*
  In your fair minds let this acceptance take.'

Mr. Fleay, however, expresses (*Life of Shakespeare*, p. 274) much contempt for 'the schoolboy interpretation' (favoured by a long series of commentators from Malone to Mr. Aldis Wright) which explains the penultimate line in the above passage as referring to the *Three Parts* of *Henry VI*; '"their,'" he says, '*more Shakespeariano*, like "they" in the previous line, refers in form to the "many" of the' last line but one preceding, 'but in meaning to the actors of 1 *Henry VI*, in which play, but not in 3 *Henry VI*, the loss of France is treated of.' But, apart from the fact that England bleeds a good deal in *Parts II* and *III*, why should an appeal have been made 'for the sake' of those who lost one kingdom and brought another near to ruin? It remains curious, no doubt, that Shakspere should have broadly designated as 'our stage' a different theatre from that with which he is known to have been connected; but the unusual catholicity of the appeal might be held to furnish an additional indication of his having had a personal connexion with the plays to which he alludes. At the same time, the passage in the *Epilogue* to *Henry V* cannot be interpreted as a claim on Shakspere's part to the authorship of plays on the reign of Henry V's successor.

The evidence which must determine the question is accordingly in the main internal; and the most important part of Malone's

Dissertation, as of the arguments subsequently advanced in support of the hypothesis that Shakspere was the author of the remodelled plays, lies in the attempt to establish the marks of his authorship in those portions which are newly inserted in, or materially vary from, the text of the *Contention* and the *True Tragedie*. The most notable objection to the supposition of Shakspere's authorship may perhaps be found in the great amount of rimed lines occurring in the earliest among the plays which are indisputably Shakspere's; but Miss Lee is surely justified in contending that this argument is of little value in the case of plays incontestably founded on others in which there is the same absence of rime. When, apart from this, we come to the general question of resemblances—or even identities—of phrase, and to that of relative boldness, freedom and vigour of treatment, it cannot be denied that there is much collective force in the illustrations put forward by Malone, and after him by Miss Lee. I am not myself so much impressed by coincidences of diction which may after all be diversely accounted for, or by instances of inaccuracy or repetition for which closer parallels may perhaps be found in Shakspere than in other dramatists of his age, as by those additional touches of vivid characterisation—conveyed at times by a mere phrase or simile—that are Shaksperean alike in their spontaneity and in their force. Shakspere's participation in the additions and variations—a participation sufficient to give to the two plays as a whole the dominant colouring of his genius as a dramatic poet—may to my mind be regarded as established. Are we, however, on this account to reject as untenable the suggestion that the internal evidence furnished by these additions and variations points, although with a less degree of cogency, to the conclusion that Marlowe had a joint share in them? The hypothesis is beset on external grounds by difficulties from which Mr. Fleay's theory, ascribing the principal authorship of *Parts II* and *III* to Marlowe, and denying that Shakspere had any substantial share in these plays, is exempt. The latter theory is not one which I think it possible to accept; but while Miss Lee has cautiously advanced, and pertinently illustrated, the more tentative hypothesis, there is much that is suggestive in Mr. Fleay's daring analysis of the plays with a view to a detailed proof of his own proposition. If we take as a signal instance the scenes which he calls 'the salt' of *Part II*, viz. those which make up the third act, with the addition of the first scene of the fourth, we shall find it difficult to deny that there is much in these that argues

Marlowe's passionate power, although they contain passages in which, if anywhere, we seem called upon to trace the hand of Shakspere,—e. g. the lines:

> 'What stronger breast-plate than a heart untainted?' &c.

In *Part III*, again, the alternative—Shakspere, or a revision by Shakspere succeeding or concurrent with one by Marlowe—at times almost irresistibly suggests itself. Miss Lee observes that Marlowe is one of the two poets from whom Shakspere quotes or copies lines; and even while declining to accept Mr. Fleay's theory as to the authorship of *Parts I* and *II*, we may do well to remember that it is bound up with his further conjecture, which is not in my opinion lightly to be rejected, concerning the authorship of *Richard III*. This play, between which and *Henry VI* there is an undeniable organic connexion, he believes to have been Shakspere's completion, with alterations of a play on the same subject left unfinished by Marlowe at his death. But leaving this theory aside for the present, I am obliged to come to the conclusion that while there is good reason for adhering to the general view of English critics, that in *Parts II* and *III* of *Henry VI* we have two plays which Shakspere was the chief agent in 'revising and reforming,' yet the more they are studied the more difficult it becomes to ignore the probability that Marlowe had a share in the revision and reformation, as well as in the composition, of the earlier plays.

It remains, in conclusion, to add a few words as to the authorship of the play designated in the First Folio as the *First Part* of *Henry VI*, and of which no previous edition is known to have been printed or entered in the Stationers' Registers (for this was manifestly not the '*First Part*' entered by Pavier with the *Second* in 1602). Of this play we have no earlier original corresponding to those of *Parts II* and *III*; nor is there the slightest evidence that such a play may have existed, in the shape of that produced by Henslowe, or of that (which *may* have been identical with it) alluded to by Nashe (*ante*, p. 58). Malone, who appears at first to have held a different opinion, in his *Dissertation* pronounced that *Part I*, as it now appears, was 'the entire or nearly entire production of some ancient dramatist,' a predecessor of Shakspere; but who that author was, he thought it impossible to ascertain. His chief purpose was to 'vindicate' Shakspere himself from responsibility for the play,—or at all events for more than one or two scenes in it. In the opinion at which he arrived Malone had been in some measure anticipated by Maurice Morgann, who in his celebrated essay *On the Dramatic Character of Falstaff* (1777) refers to 'that drum-and-trumpet thing called *The First Part of Henry VI*, written doubtless, or rather exhibited, long before Shakspere was born, though afterwards repaired, I think, and furbished up by him with here and there a little sentiment and diction.' According to Malone, who rested his conclusion chiefly on internal evidence, the diction, versification and allusions of the play are un-Shaksperean; and this part of the argument, including, *pace* Steevens', the long list of mythological and historical allusions which do not 'naturally arise out of the text, but seem to be inserted merely to show the author's learning,' is remarkably full and striking. Certain contradictions as to statements of fact pointed out by Malone between this play and undoubtedly genuine Shaksperean dramas appear to me of relatively slight significance. That Heminge and Condell printed the play as Shakspere's, is thought by Malone to be explicable on various suppositions—among them on that of Shakspere's having, for the advantage of his own theatre, added a few lines to the *First Part* after the performance of the *Second* and *Third*, whereupon it seemed appropriate to link all three together in the first collective edition of his works. Malone's arguments on this subject long held the field, Drake even proposing to exclude the *First Part* altogether from all future editions of Shakspere's works, as exhibiting no trace of any finishing strokes from his hand. At last Charles Knight (in vol. ii. of his *Pictorial Edition*, 1839–43) came forward as a thorough-going champion of Shakspere's authorship of all the *Three Parts* of *Henry VI*, in the whole of which, taken together with *Richard III*, he perceived a complete unity. Grant White is assuredly justified in attaching, from his own point of view, no little importance to this theory, although he is himself altogether opposed to it. Among German critics, Ulrici, following in the wake of Schlegel and Tieck, described the *Three Parts* as a great trilogy, of which he defined the ground-idea (*Lectures*, p. 387), and at a later date (1864) emphatically insisted upon Shakspere's authorship of every one of the *Parts*. Gervinus thought that Shakspere's share in the play was confined to those passages which connect it with the *Second* and *Third Part*; the whole he considered an example of the way in which Shakspere did *not* write historical tragedy. This agrees with the view of Hallam, and, among later Shakspere critics, with that of Dr. Furnivall, who while holding that of their 'superb subject but little is made' in the *Henry VI* plays, considers *Part I* 'broken and choppy to an interminable degree.'

The general tendency of modern Shakspere-criticism has been to allow itself unusual freedom of indulgence in recording its impressions as to what lines, passages or scenes of this play may have been inserted in it by Shakspere. Coleridge thought that many lines in it were Shakspere's; Dr. Furnivall (with whom I am much inclined to agree) 'puts down' to him the stirring Temple Gardens scene of the Red and White Roses (act ii. sc. 4); Mr. Fleay, Talbot's fight near Bordeaux (act iv. scs. 2–7). As to the authorship of the play as a whole, nothing can be regarded as established except that it was the work of several hands; that Shakspere revised it, as we believe him to have revised *The Contention* and the *True Tragedie,* is however a conclusion in which I cannot follow Grant White. The fact that the play is mainly founded on Hall, and not on Holinshed, is hardly one to which I should be inclined to attach a decisive importance in this connexion. But even as a mere adaptation, it exhibits divergences too extraordinary from Shakspere's usual method of treating a historical subject, and too marked a want of discretion and sobriety in the free introduction of all manner of idle tales—above all in the revolting rapidity of the developement of the *Pucelle*-story—to allow of its being accepted as Shakspere's. Who the chief writers were that combined in the original 'medley,' need not remain altogether a matter of conjecture. Nothing could be more ingenious than Mr. Fleay's systematic application of the tests of orthography of proper names, or more painstaking than his appropriation to particular authors of particular matter. Grant White, trusting to more general impressions of style and metrification, has arrived at conclusions differing from Mr. Fleay's in detail, but reaching much the same general result; and while I am inclined to agree with him that Greene's style of thought—I would add of ornament—and versification is most largely to be detected throughout the play, it can hardly be doubted that Marlowe—and perhaps Peele and Lodge, to the latter of whom Mr. Fleay attributes the scene (act v. sc. 3) containing the lines:

> 'She is beautiful and therefore to be woo'd;
> She is a woman, therefore to be won'—

were prominently concerned in this strange, but by no means intrinsically improbable, partnership.

Mr. Fleay is of opinion (*Life of Shakespeare*, p. 262) that it was

Shakspere's additions to this play, in which all the principal playwrights of the time had been concerned, that suggested to his galled mind the attack upon 'the upstart crow beautified with our feathers.' But neither this interpretation, nor the more usual one which utilises the allusion to a line in the *True Tragedie*, can be regarded as a necessary explanation of Greene's invective.

While nothing short of a detailed examination of the internal evidence, for which the present is not the proper place, can approach more closely to a solution of the question of the authorship of the *Three Parts* of *Henry VI*, any renewed study of them must impress more deeply upon the reader the significance of the influence to which Shakspere was subjected through the originals of the *Second* and *Third Parts*, and through his personal connexion as a reviser with them and a contributor with the *First Part*. That influence, exerted directly or indirectly through writers whom it had already affected—above all, perhaps through the imitative Greene—was the influence of Marlowe, which by no means came to an end when his and Shakspere's dramatic labours were no longer combined or interwoven.

(5) THE COMEDY OF ERRORS. I a. *Mal.* 5. M.

There can be no doubt but that this was one of the earliest, if not the earliest, of Shakspere's comedies. It may date back as far as July 1589, but cannot have been produced earlier, since the pun as to France 'making war against her hair' (act iii. sc. 2) must, as Theobald first pointed out, refer to the struggle against the succession of *Henry IV*, which commenced with the death of *Henry III*. There is great probability that Shakspere's play was the '*Comedy of Errors* (like to Plautus his *Menaechmus*)' acted December 28, 1594, at Gray's Inn under circumstances already described (*ante*, pp. 26–7 and *note*). Shakspere's comedy has no resemblance except in subject to W. W. (at one time supposed to have been William Warner)'s *Menaechmi taken out of Plautus* noticed above (vol. i. p. 263). It may possibly have been founded on a *Historie of Error*, mentioned as having been performed by the Children of Paul's 'on New Yeres daie at night,' 1576–7; but this is hardly probable. Dyce considered that as the dramas acted by these boys were generally founded on classical stories, this piece may be presumed to have been in a large measure founded on Plautus' celebrated comedy, which was also acted at Windsor in 1583. But the term 'errors' is well known to have been currently applied to dramatic actions turning on mistakes of person. Thus, Bacon, in his *Advancement of Learning* (Bk. ii. p. 238, Kitchin's edition), speaks of some 'comedies of errors, wherein the mistress and the maid change habits'; and it is in some such general sense that Burton, in the Introduction to the *Anatomy of Melancholy* (*Democritus to the Reader*), says that 'the whole world playes the fool; we have a new theatre, a new scene, a new comedy of errours, a new company of personate actors.' The Spanish term *los Engaños*, the title of a play by the early Spanish dramatist Lope de Rueda, seems rather to signify 'the Frauds'; there are features in this which made Grillparzer (see *Werke*, Stuttgart, 1874, vol. ix. p. 247) fancy that Shakspere had some acquaintance with Spanish dramatic literature. Collier's notion that the doggrel fourteen-syllable lines of the Dromios favour the supposition that Shakspere made use of some older play is, as Mr. Fleay has pointed out to me, an arbitrary inference; how would it apply to *Love's Labour's Lost*? But the general manner of parts of the *Comedy of Errors* is not contradictory to the supposition, which is favoured by the occurrence in the folio edition (noticed by Malone) of two Latin epithets applied to the brothers of unknown origin.

Shakspere's main source in the *Comedy of Errors* was of course the *Menaechmi* of Plautus, who in his turn derived the theme from a Greek original—not Epicharmus, it appears to be held, but Posidippus. Greek comedies, of which the action turned on the personal likeness of twins, seem to have been generically called Δίδυμοι, plays under this title being mentioned from the hands of six several authors. Variations of the main idea are to be found in the *Amphitruo* and in Philocomasium's story in the *Miles Gloriosus*. (Cf. Brix, *Ausgewählte Komödien des Plautus*, Bd. iii.) P. Wisclicenus, *Zwei neu-entdeckte Shakespearequellen*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xiv. (1879), shows that, while Shakspere's comedy is by no means a mere copy of the *Menaechmi*, and skilfully softens some details in which its action would have offended a modern audience, it derived from the *Amphitruo*, among other passages, the effective scene (act iii. sc. 1) in which Antipholus is excluded from his own house and wife by the 'double' servant of his 'double,' and indeed the notion of 'doubling' servants as well as masters, for superadding which Shakspere has been so elaborately criticised and defended. The hypothesis that he had not read the *Amphitruo* in the original, is rendered more probable by the fact that the greater part of act iii. sc. 1 is in the seven-foot metre familiar to the English comic drama of an earlier generation. Wisclicenus has also pointed out a probable reminiscence, suggested to him by Dr. Hermann Köstlin, from the romance of *Apollonius of Tyana* dramatised in *Pericles*, in Aegeon's exposition and in the final *dénouement* of the plot, which differ from the corresponding passages of the *Menaechmi*. I cannot think the further suggestions of reminiscences in the opening of the play from Chaucer's *Knight's Tale* and at the close from Sidney's *Arcadia* (J. Gröne, *Zwei neu-entdeckte Quellen zu Shakespeare's Komödie der Irrungen*, in *Jahrbuch*, vols. xxix. and xxx, 1894) of much importance.

The *Comedy of Errors* was reproduced before King James in 1604. The modern drama has returned to the farcical theme in a variety of adaptations too large for enumeration here.

(6) LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST. I a. *Mal.* 8. P. 1598. M.

Editors and critics are generally agreed that *Love's Labour's Lost* was one of Shakspere's early comedies, and that the form in which it was published in 1598 'as it was presented before her Highness this last Christmas' is a revision of an earlier play. Mr. Fleay, although he thinks that 'it was retouched somewhat hurriedly for this Court performance,' has entered at length into the question of these additions and alterations, which as he argues included a change of character, Holofernes, called 'Sir Holofernes' in v. 1, 103 in all the old editions, having been originally the Curate. (*Life of Shakespeare*, 202–3, with a reference to the same writer's paper on *Shakespeare and Puritanism* in *Anglia*, vol. vii.) He considers that the date of the original production cannot well be put later than 1589; but although most of the metrical tests (rimes, double-endings, and alternately riming stanzas such as are found in many of our old plays) point to an early date, the frequency of *enjambement* has been thought to favour the supposition of a rather later period of writing. See the authorities cited by Prof. G. Sarrazin in his essay *Zur Chronologie von Shakespeare's Jugenddramen*, in *Jahrbuch*, vols. xxix. and xxx, 1894, where it is more strikingly observed that the diction of *Love's Labour's Lost* exhibits an advance upon that of *The Comedy of Errors* and a 'virtuosity' such as Shakspere could hardly have reached in the twenty-sixth year of his age.—Sarrazin notes several parallelisms of expressions in *Richard III* and *Love's Labour's Lost*, which in his opinion are reminiscences in the latter from the former play, and further points out resemblances between both plays, especially *Love's Labour's*

Lost, and *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594). *Romeo and Juliet* in its turn contains reminiscences both of *Love's Labour's Lost* and of *The Rape of Lucrece*. The names of the heroes of our comedy are taken from those of prominent commanders in the French Civil War, in which large numbers of Englishmen were serving under Essex in 1591; and it is known from the diary of one of these that in the intervals of warfare Marshal Biron and his officers invited their English allies to indulge in all kinds of sports and gallantries. See the abstract of Mr. S. L. Lee's paper on *Love's Labour's Lost* (1884) in *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1880–6, pp. 80–2 (an expansion of an article contributed by Mr. Lee in 1880 to *The Gentleman's Magazine*), where it is further suggested that the 'little Academe' of the play was probably intended as a playful satire on contemporary schemes for the disciplining of youth. In an interesting essay on the *Topical Side of the Elizabethan Drama* (1886), printed in the *Transactions*, 1887–90, p. 1 *seqq.*, Mr. Lee expresses an opinion that the popularity of *Love's Labour's Lost* at the time of its production is explained by the fact that it humoured a prevalent taste for plays 'dealing directly with local and contemporary topics, and mirroring passing events with comparatively slight distortion.' I propose to return to this view, according to which the play is a species of historical extravaganza, in a later place in this chapter. As further bearing on the question of date, it may be noted that the Italian couplet—

'Venetia, Venetia,
Chi non ti vede, non ti pretia'—

(act iv. sc. 2) are supposed to have been derived from Florio's *Second Fruits* (1591), and that the allusion to the plague (act v. sc. 2) suits the year 1592, when the pestilence was in London. (See *ante*, vol. i. p. 424 and *note*, as to Nashe's *Summer's Last Will and Testament*, held to have been produced in that year, where the words 'Lord have mercy on us,' habitually inscribed on plague-stricken houses, are likewise introduced.)

No notice of the play occurs in contemporary literature before 1598 (the year after its revival), when it is mentioned both by Meres and in a poem by R. T. (Robert Tofte), entitled *Alba, or The Month's Minde of a Melancholy Lover*.

The title of the comedy seems to have been, or become, a kind of proverbial phrase. One of the *Love Posies* in a MS. collection dating from about the year 1596 is called '*Love unloved, labour ill* *lost.*' (See Arber's *English Garner*, vol. i, 1877, p. 616.) The poem *A Warning for Wooers*, &c., in the *Handful of Pleasant Delights* (1584), describes the love of women as 'the thing that yeelds but labour lost'; the object of these verses, as Dr. Furnivall points out, has nothing to do with Shakspere's play. (*Fresh Allusions*, &c., pp. 6–7.)

The source of the plot remains undiscovered; and it therefore remains an open question whether it be Shakspere's own invention. There is no historical foundation for the incident of the dispute as to Aquitaine between France and Navarre, and no King Ferdinand ever ruled over the latter realm. On the other hand, a personal reference has been sought (by Tieck and others) in the character of Holofernes (whose name is doubtless taken from Rabelais' *Gargantua*) to the celebrated Giovanni Florio already mentioned, an Italian teacher who was the author of an Italian dictionary called *The World of Words*, dedicated to Southampton, and who was supposed by Mr. Gerald Massey to have incurred Shakspere's resentment by speaking of 'the plays that are neither right comedys nor right tragedys, but representations of Historys without decorum.' There is no evidence to bear out the conjecture; and as Delius observes, such an attempt at a personal caricature was not in Shakspere's manner. But commentators will never obey the injunction of Ben Jonson, and will remain 'politic pick-locks of the scene' to the end. It is well pointed out by Simrock that the characters of the pedant and of the boasting soldier (the *capitan spavento* of the Italian and the *thraso* of the Latin stage) are favourite figures of Italian comedy. The humour of the character of Armado turns so largely upon his fantastical, and that of Holofernes upon his pedantic, fashions of speech, and the whole of the dialogue among the courtiers and the ladies is so impregnated with the spirit of the wit-combats of the age, that Shakspere doubtless pressed into his service new and telling phrases where they were readiest to hand, employing *inter alia* a number of expressions resembling, or borrowed from, phrases in *Euphues*. Mr. Rushton in *Shakespeare's Euphuism* (1871) has collected a dozen of these, including the Biblical phrase 'the weaker vessel' (in Armado's letter, act i. sc. 1), which Shakspere frequently uses elsewhere. But on examination, it will be found that neither these phrases, nor any character or part of the dialogue, can be properly set down as ridicule of Euphuism by Shakspere. (Cf. *ante*, vol. i. pp. 279 and 281.) Dr. Brandes well points out that Biron and Rosaline in *Love's*

Labour's Lost may be regarded as the first sketch of Benedick and Beatrice in *Much Ado.* I cannot follow the same author into his speculations as to the identity of the original of Rosaline with her of the dark lady of the *Sonnets*—Mary Fitton, as Dr. Brandes believes; but the parallelism between act iv. sc. 3 and Sonnet cxxvii. (cf. also Sonnet cxxxvii.) is most remarkable.

The *Sonnets*, 'If love make me forsworn' (act iv. sc. 2), and 'Did not the heavenly rhetoric of thine eye' (*ib.* sc. 3), as well as the lines 'On a day' (*ib.*), were reprinted as Shakspere's by Jaggard in *The Passionate Pilgrim* (1599). The ballad of *King Cophetua and the Beggar-maid* (see act iv. sc. 1 *et al.*) is printed in Percy's *Reliques*; on the Italian eccentric '*Monarcho*' (alluded to in the same scene) an epitaph had been printed in a collection by Thomas Churchyard (1580); the 'dancing horse' to whom Moth makes appeal (act i. sc. 2) is of course the celebrated 'Bankes's Horse,' named Marocco, on whom Thomas Bastard published an epigram in 1598, and whose exploits are narrated by Cardinal Morton, Sir Walter Raleigh, and Sir Kenelm Digby. *The Pageant of the Nine Worthies*, out of which so much fun is made in act v., was represented in Queen Mary's time. 'Each of the Worthies,' says Strype, 'made his speech,' no doubt commencing as in our comedy, with 'Pompey I am,' 'Judas I am' (*scilicet* Maccabaeus), &c. Cf. Warton's *History of English Poetry* (edn. 1870), sec. liii.

(7) THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA. I b. *Mal.* 4. M.

Inasmuch as this play was neither entered in the Registers nor printed before 1623, the only external evidence as to its date is Meres' mention of it in 1598. The lines as to expeditions of war and discovery, noted by Malone, at the commencement of act i. sc. 3, and an incidental allusion to the pestilence, will not suffice to fix the play to a particular year. Resemblances (besides the reference to Julia's dark complexion noticed below) have been pointed out in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and in the *Sonnets*; there are two allusions in the comedy (act i. sc. 1, and act iii. sc. 1) to the story —not necessarily to the poem—of *Hero and Leander*; an allusion to the characteristics of Spenser's *Sonnets* (1595) has been sought in the reference to 'wilful sonnets' of 'heaven-bred' beauty in act iii. sc. 2, and I have found Lance's pun about 'the unkindest *tide*' (*tied*)—reproduced by Thomas Hood—in Lyly's *Endimion* (1579, printed 1591).

The internal evidence is not altogether in favour of this play being reckoned, as it frequently has been, among the very earliest of Shakspere's comedies. The rime and double-endings tests would certainly place it later in the list than these, though the general character of the versification is still early; and the plot, though not particularly effective, is not put together without dramatic skill, as is well shown in Professor Zupitza's analysis of Shakspere's free use of his materials. (See his address *Über die Fabel in Shakespeare's Beiden Veronesern* in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xxiii, 1888.) On the other hand, the characterisation is relatively slight, and there is no approach to the imaginative power shown in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, a circumstance accounted for by Dr. Furnivall on the theory that as after *The Tempest*, so after the *Dream*, there was 'a partial exhaustion of original effort, and a falling-back on outside models.' My own impression is indicated by the place which I have assigned to *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* in my list.

There is no proof that this comedy is, as Halliwell-Phillipps thought possible, and as Zupitza is likewise disposed to believe, an expansion of an older play. Already Tieck, however, recognised in the tragedy of *Julius and Hippolyta*, one of the old plays acted in Germany by the English comedians, a piece resembling in subject the principal plot of *The Two Gentlemen*, which turns on the faithlessness of Proteus to his friend Valentine (the names are admirably chosen for the false friend and the true lover), and thence conjectured that both this and Shakspere's comedy were founded on some earlier drama. Was this, as has been thought possible, the *Phillipo and Hewpolyto* repeatedly mentioned in Henslowe's *Diary*, in 1597 and 1595? The German play has been reprinted by Cohn, in his *Shakespeare in Germany*, pp. 112–156; cf. *ib.* p. cxi. Here we have an indication that the portion of the plot which turns on the friend's treachery was derived from some earlier source. The origin of the remaining portion, which is occupied with Julia's enduring love, is to be found in the celebrated Spanish collection of romances, the *Diana Enamorada* of Jorge (George) de Montemayor, by birth a Portuguese. This work, in which the several stories are linked together more closely and ingeniously than are the episodes of the *Arcadia* of Sannazaro by which it was suggested, was first printed in 1542, and attained to an extraordinary popularity. (See Ticknor's *History of Spanish Literature*, vol. iii. pp. 82 *seqq.*) The first English translation of it, by Bartholomew Yonge, was not published till 1598, but existed in MS. already in 1582 or 1583. The *Story of the Shepherdess Felismena*, which was included in the collection, and which was reprinted by Collier in vol. ii. of his *Shakespeare's Library*, was adapted for the court stage in a piece called *The History of Felix and Philomena*, acted at Greenwich in 1584. In Montemayor Don Felix corresponds to Proteus, and Felismena, who relates her own story, to Julia. An eclogue by Barnaby Googe, published in 1563, versifies this particular story in the *Diana*, introducing the name of Valerio. Montemayor could hardly have seen Bandello's novel of *Apollonius and Silla*, as Simrock suggests, since the collection including it did not appear till 1554, or Cinthio's version of the story in his *Hecatomenithi*, written before but printed after Bandello's (1561); Shakspere, however, might have seen Barnaby Rich's English reproduction of the story, which more closely follows Cinthio's. Both the Italian versions bear a resemblance in subject to the story of Felismena, and to one or both of them, as will be seen, the main source of *Twelfth Night* is to be traced. The conclusion of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* might of course have been independently influenced by that of the story of *Apollonius and Silla*, but this assumption is unnecessary. A scene in the play (act iv. sc. 1) may have been derived by Shakspere from Sidney's *Arcadia*, which also circulated in MS. for some years before it was printed (in 1590); but, as Delius says, the resemblance may be purely accidental. Of greater importance are the reminiscences in the play of Arthur Brooke's poem, *The Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet* (1562), to which Zupitza has referred. (See also the notice in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xxii, 1887, p. 210, of the observations of the Swedish critic, Dr. Henrik Schück, as to resemblances, including the use of the same proper names, between *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Two Gentlemen*.)

Klein, *Geschichte des Dramas*, vol. iv. pp. 785 *seqq*., has pointed out the similarity between our comedy and Parabosco's *Il Viluppo* (1559 or earlier), which he regards as one of the sources of the play. Shakspere may possibly have had some knowledge of the Italian comedy; the peculiar reference of Julia to her 'black' complexion (act iv. sc. 4) certainly recalls the artificial darkness of Parabosco's page; but see above as to Rosaline in *Love's Labour's Lost*; it cannot have been due to his reading only that Shakspere deprived several among his heroines of the usual allowance of roses and lilies. Klein mistakes, however, in supposing the *Diana* not to have been published till 1560; so that Parabosco's play may after all have had the same source as Shakspere's.

The opening of the scene between Julia and her waiting-maid Lucetta (act i. sc. 2) introduces a review of suitors, which contains in germ the famous dialogue between Portia and Nerissa in *The Merchant of Venice.*

The title of our play may conceivably have been suggested by the second title of Munday's *Fidele and Fortunatus* (entered 1584), —*Two Italian Gentlemen.* It may have in its turn suggested those of *The Two Noble Kinsmen,* and of Shirley's *Gentleman of Venice.*

(8) A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM. I a. *Mal.* 10. E. and P. 1600.

The above data might be held to settle in at least one direction the question as to the time of composition of this play—born of fancies which appropriately predestined it for the bewilderment of critics. Twice printed in the year 1600, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was mentioned by Meres in his *Palladis Tamia,* published in 1598, and, according to Halliwell-Phillipps, 'early' in that year. Yet, according to a theory advocated by Tieck and apparently regarded as acceptable by Ulrici, the play was intended to grace Southampton's wedding, which was not celebrated till that year, probably towards its close. By way of circumventing this difficulty, Mr. Gerald Massey conjectured that it was indeed designed for Southampton's wedding, but was composed some years previously, probably in 1595, when the Queen's consent to the marriage was still thought obtainable.

On the other hand, Professor Dowden agrees with K. Elze (*Zum Sommernachtstraum,* in *Jahrbuch,* vol. iii, 1868) and H. Kurz (*Zum Sommernachtstraum, ib.,* vol. iv, 1869) in favouring the hypothesis that the play was written for the wedding of Essex with Walsingham's daughter, early in 1590. This would practically throw back the date of the composition of the play to 1589. Kurz is positive that it could not have been written after 1590, when were published the first three books of Spenser's great poem, in which the Fairy Queen was identified with Elisabeth, so that Shakspere could not have forgotten himself so far as to represent *his* Fairy Queen as enamoured of Bottom!

Mr. Fleay thinks that the play may have graced the weddings both of William Stanley, Earl of Derby (younger brother of Ferdinand, Earl of Derby, better known in connexion with Shakspere's theatrical career as Lord Strange), which took place in June, 1597, and of Edward Russell, Earl of Bedford, celebrated in December of the same year. Since, however, he considers that the play exhibits numerous traces of having been altered from a version for public to one for Court performance, this conjecture is of relatively slight significance. It agrees, however, with the supposition that the passage in act ii. sc. 1, where Titania describes at length the recent state of the weather, refers to the storms, pestilence, and dearth which befell England in 1594; although a similar but not equal stress of weather was experienced in 1591. Dyce thinks that Quince's jest (act i. sc. 2), as to 'some of your French crowns having no hair at all,' would hardly have been uttered before 1594–5; indeed it was at a still later date that, so far as I know, this difficulty became a more general topic of discussion. Lastly, the lines in act v. sc. 1:—

> 'The thrice three Muses mourning for the death
> Of learning, late deceased in beggary'—

(for the form of the initial phrase ten Brinck compares 'the thrise three learnèd Ladies' in *The Faerie Queene*, bk. i. canto x. st. 54) have been interpreted as an allusion, near in date to its subject, either to Spenser's poem *The Teares of the Muses* (1591) or to Spenser's own death in 1599. The date of the latter event places it out of the question; the supposed allusion to *The Teares of the Muses*, on the other hand, has been made the basis of an original theory, as to the significance of the burlesque drama enacted by the company of tradesmen, which, with deep respect for its author, I cannot but regard as paradoxical. (See ten Brinck, *Über den Sommernachtstraum*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xiii, 1878, esp. p. 108, where Shakspere is supposed to have put before the gentlemen of the Universities, who despised the unlearned drama, a caricature of their conception of the creation of the popular stage. 'Am I not right, Spenser,'—so Shakspere seems to say to the poet of *The Teares of the Muses*,—'such are we barbarians, drawn from the life?') The hypothesis that these lines refer to the death of Robert Greene (1592), which I confess seems to me preposterous, is defended by Mr. Stokes, and elaborated with his usual completeness by Mr. Fleay, who believes that 'the company originally satirised in Shakespeare's play was the Earl of Sussex's; Bottom, the chief clown, being intended for Robert Greene.' The allusion to the ladies' fear of the lion has been connected with the Scottish festivities on the occasion of the christening of Prince Henry (1604), when a Moor was substituted for the tame lion who was to have adorned the show, 'because his presence might have brought some fear.'

The general character of the comedy indicates that it was written at a relatively advanced date in the period of Shakspere's early productivity; and 1594 or 1595 seems well to suit the internal evidence of form. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* contains more riming lines and fewer lines with double-endings than any of Shakspere's comedies except *Love's Labour's Lost*, and the construction of the main action is slight and of the 'errors' type; on the other hand, it exhibits not only an extraordinary fertility of imagination, but also an obvious growth of dramatic and general formative power, wholly incompatible with the workmanship of a beginner. Although I cannot hold that any of the efforts which have been made to show that this play was written for performance on some particular festive occasion, yet it has certain features unmistakeably resembling those of a masque; and the performance of the tradesmen may even, if a technical term be desiderated, as it has been by Elze, called an *anti-masque*.

The title of the play has been impugned by Simrock, who, appealing to the authority of Goethe and his introduction of the *Golden Marriage of Oberon and Titania* as an intermezzo into the Walpurgis-night in *Faust*, argues that its action belongs not to midsummer (as he thinks was erroneously deduced from Titania's speech in act ii. sc. 2), but to the eve of Mayday, this being the night actually consecrated in romantic legend to spirits. He has been answered by Kurz.

Various parts and features of this comedy have been traced to special sources. (For an exhaustive survey of the learning on the subject see Mr. H. H. Furness, *New Variorum* Edition, 1895.) The Thesean framework must have been due to some acquaintance on the part of Shakspere with *The Life of Theseus* in North's translation of Plutarch's *Lives*, of which editions appeared in 1579 and 1595; here occur a number of proper names which reappear in the comedy. No doubt, Theseus and Hippolyta had appeared previously to Shakspere as personages in epic poetry and romance; and Philostratus, who in the play is Theseus' master of the revels, in Chaucer's *Knighte's Tale* is his 'chiefe squire' (Arcite *incognito*). (Cf. ten Brinck, *u. s.*, p. 102.) The story of the magic potion and of its effects Shakspere may have found in Montemayor's *Diana*, of which the English translation, although not printed till 1598, was already in existence in 1582 or 1583. Some fundamental resemblances in the main plot of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* are, no doubt, likewise traceable to the later adventures of Felismena at the court of the wise magician Felicia in the *Diana* (see F. Krauss, *Eine Quelle zum Sommernachtstraum*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xi, 1876); but the differences are too considerable to allow us to attach much moment to the coincidences.—I cannot quite understand whether Klein (*Geschichte des Dramas*, vol. iv. p. 886) considers Shakspere to have been in any sense indebted to the Italian comedy of *Gl'Intrighi d'Amore*, which has been erroneously attributed to Torquato Tasso.

The general idea of the machinery of Oberon and his fairy-court was in all probability taken by Shakspere from Greene's *Scottish History of James IV* (1590 *circ.*), as to which cf. *ante*, vol. i. pp. 400 *seqq.* The source of the Oberon of earlier English poets is the Old-French popular romance of *Huon and Auberon*, translated in 1579 by Lord Berners under the title of *Huon of Bordeaux* (edited for the *Early English Text Society*, 1883–5); there can be no question but that Oberon is identical with the *Alberich* (*i.e. elf-king*; for the root cf. *alp*, *albus*, &c.) of early German popular fiction, and of the *Nibelungenlied.* Oberon appears in Ben Jonson's *Oberon, the Fairy Prince, a Masque of Prince Henry's* (1611), as well as in *Lust's Dominion*, a play of disputed origin, and probably earlier date. (See Fleay, *The English Drama*, vol. i. p. 272, where the scene with Oberon is assigned to Day.) The name of Titania, as was shown by the late Professor T. S. Baynes in the second of his papers, *What Shakespeare learnt at School*, in *Fraser's Magazine*, vol. xxi, for January, 1880, in which he copiously illustrates Shakspere's predilection for Ovid, must have been derived by him from the *Metamorphoses*, where it 'occurs as the designation of several female deities, supreme or subordinate' (including Diana), 'descended from the Titans.' (Simrock's derivation of the name from *Titti* (children), the stealing of whom is a favourite pursuit of the elfin spirits, must be judged by comparative philologists.) Puck's character was familiar to Englishmen under the name of Robin Goodfellow, whose *Mad Pranks and Merry Jests* fill a volume, not indeed known to have been printed till 1628, but in Collier's opinion dating at least forty years further back. 'Among the Irish,' writes Bishop Bedell to Bishop Laud in August, 1630, concerning an unpopular Chancellor entailed upon the former prelate, 'he hath gotten the name of Pouke, and indeed they fear him like the fiend of hell.' (Gardiner, *History of England*, vol. viii, 1884, p. 42. Cf. as to the appearances of this personage in English poetry, Walden's *Sad Shepherd*, Appendix, p. 133.) The Robin Goodfellow of *Wily Beguiled* (pr. 1606) is a human impostor. I am not acquainted with W. Bell's *Shakespeare's Puck and his Folkslore, &c.*, 3 vols., 1852. As to the fairy machinery of the play in general, see Halliwell-Phillipps' *Illustrations of the Fairy Mythology of A Midsummer Night's Dream*, (old) *Shakespeare Society's Publications*, 1845.

The notion of the tradesmen's play—and who shall say how many of the humours which are wont to repeat themselves in exhibitions of this favourite form of aspiring fatuity—must have been primarily suggested to Shakspere by the performances of the guilds with which his native county was specially familiar. It probably prompted, about forty years afterwards, Ben Jonson's malicious device of a 'Dance of Mechanics' in his *Love's Welcome, the King and Queen's Entertainment at Bolsover* (1634). It cannot have been unknown to the Silesian poet, Andreas Gryphius, author of *Absurda Comica, oder Herr Peter Squenz* (Quince), *Schimpfspiel* (1665), or at all events to the Nürnberg mathematician, Daniel Schwenter, said by Goedeke (*Elf Bücher Deutscher Dichtung*, 1849, vol. i. p. 374) to have previously treated the same theme. The particular story of Pyramus and Thisbe, though Shakspere might have found it in Chaucer's *Legende of Good Women*, was more probably taken by him direct from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, or from Golding's translation of the poem (1565–7); unless, as Mr. Fleay thinks, the interlude was based on Clement Robinson's *Handfull of Pleasant Delights* (1584), reprinted in Collier's *Seven English Poetical Miscellanies* (1867). A book called *Perymus and Thesbye* was entered on the *Stationers' Registers* in 1563.

A hypothesis of signal ingenuity has been elaborated to explain the famous passage in act ii. sc. 2 (which passage, in the opinion of Delius, perfectly explains itself). Already Warburton had conjectured that this passage possessed a hidden significance, referring to the relations between Mary Queen of Scots, her adherents the Northern lords, and the Dauphin. This 'solution' left untouched the allusion afterwards suspected in the imagery of the Siren on the Dolphin to the pageantry exhibited before Queen Elisabeth at Kenilworth, and the supposed allegorical meaning of the 'little western flower.' Mr. Halpin in his *Oberon's Vision, &c.*, quoted above, vol. i. p. 290, in reference to Lyly's *Endimion*, has 'paraphrased' the entire passage, thus:

> '*O.* Come hither, Puck. You doubtless remember when, once upon a time, sitting together on a rising ground, or *bray*, by the side of a piece of water, we saw what to us appeared (though to others it might have worn a different semblance) a mermaid sitting on a dolphin's back, and singing so sweetly to the accompaniment of a band of music, placed inside of the artificial dolphin, that one could very well imagine the waves of the magic sea before us would, had they been ruffled, have calmed and settled themselves down to listen to her melody; and, at the same time, there was a flight of artificial fireworks resembling stars, which plunged very strangely out of their natural element down into the water, and, after remaining there a while, rose again into the air, as if wishing to hear once more the sea-maid's music. *P.* I remember such things to have been exhibited amongst the pageantry at Kenilworth Castle, during the Princely Pleasures given on the occasion of Queen Elisabeth's visit in 1575. *O.* You are right. Well, at that very time and place, I (and perhaps a few others of the choicer spirits) could discern a circumstance that was imperceptible to you (and the meaner multitude of guests and visitants): in fact, I saw—wavering in his passion between (Cynthia, or) Queen Elisabeth, and (Tellus, or) the Lady Douglas, Countess of Sheffield, (Endymion, or) the Lord of Leicester [either *alarmed* at the progress of his rival, the Duke of Alençon, with the Queen, or] *all-armed*, in the magnificence of his preparations for storming the heart of his Royal Mistress. He made a pre-determined and a well-directed effort for the hand of Elisabeth, the Virgin Queen of England; and presumptuously made such love to her—rash under all the circumstances—as if he fancied that neither she nor any woman in the world could resist his suit; but it was evident to me (and to the rest of the *initiated*) that the ardent Leicester's desperate venture was lost in the pride, prudery, and jealousy of power, which invariably swayed the tide of Elisabeth's passions; and the Virgin Queen finally departed from Kenilworth Castle unshackled with a matrimonial engagement, and as heart-whole as ever. And yet, curious to observe the collateral issues of this amorous preparation, I watched (whatever others may have done) and discovered the person on whom Leicester's irregular passion was secretly fixed: it was fixed upon Lettice, at that time the wife of Walter Earl of Essex, an Englishwoman of rank inferior to the object of his great ambition; who, previous to this unhappy attachment, was not only pure and innocent in conduct, but unblemished also in reputation; after which she became not only deeply inflamed with a criminal passion, and still more deeply (perhaps) stained with a husband's blood, but the subject, also, of shame and obloquy. Those, however, who pity her weakness, and compassionate her misery, still offer a feeble apology for her conduct, by calling it the result of her husband's voluntary absence, of the waste of affections naturally tender and fond, and of the idleness of a heart that might have been faithful if busied with honest duties, and filled with domestic loves. You cannot mistake, after all I have said. Go—fetch me that flower.'

The theory thus ingeniously developed, is supported by the further conjectures that the discovery might have been made by

Edward Arden, supposed (on unsatisfactory evidence) to have been the head of the house to which Shakspere's mother belonged; that Shakspere attended in his suite at Kenilworth; and that Arden's death, due to Leicester, was caused by his having, after scorning to wear the favourite's livery at Kenilworth, traced the adulterer in his secret crime. Finally, the evidence of Lyly's *Endimion*, interpreted with similar ingenuity, is adduced to explain the origin and nature of Leicester's disgrace which, however, did not occur till four years later. (See above, as cited.)

Mr. Massey, too, thought that while the episode of Helena and Hermia contained an allusion to Lady Elisabeth Vernon's jealousy of her cousin, Lady Rich, the 'little western flower' signified the Countess of Essex, afterwards married to Leicester, the mother of Lady Rich and the aunt of Elisabeth Vernon.

The temptation to such an exercise of ingenuity as Mr. Halpin's was unusual; for that Lyly loved such mystery-making is certain, and that his *Endimion* has reference to Lord Leicester seems highly probable; while the imagery of the Siren and the Dolphin may very naturally have been connected in Shakspere's mind with the Kenilworth pageantry (of which several accounts might have been before him). But, apart from criticism of details, into which I need not again enter here (see the previous passage cited above), the passage in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* needs no historical interpretation; the allegory suggested by the name and appearance of the flower explains itself; it is *western* because Cupid is shooting in that direction and aiming at the chaste Moon, to which the Siren is in natural antithesis, and because being an *English* flower it is naturally spoken of as growing in that region. At the same time I have little doubt but that the Vestal throning in the west, *i.e.* the Moon, naturally suggested the figure of the Queen so often compared to the chaste Cynthia, and that the antithesis of the Siren was further elaborated by Shakspere in remembrance of the famous pageant at Kenilworth. From this, however, it is an enormous step to the elaboration of such a historical allegory as Mr. Halpin's, which it would have been unlike the bent of Shakspere's dramatic genius to attempt, and entirely beyond the power of an ordinary public—and the wish of a Court audience—to follow. There is some truth in Klein's mysterious hint that the flower is the key to the play; for 'love in idleness,' *i.e.* misdirected love, is the subject of its plot, and the text of such moral as it implies. But Mr. Halpin's endeavour is so exceptionally complete in its ingenuity, that I neither liked to pass it by, nor to state its substance in any words but his own, which fully explain it (whatever modifications they may in part require). And it is by no means impossible that while far from desiring to elaborate a historical allegory, Shakspere may in this famous passage have intended an *allusion* to the passion which in vain sought to overcome the scruples of the Virgin Queen. So much may be allowed, without further accepting the identification of every personage in the allegory, or the nice adjustment of every expression into agreement with an ingenious interpretation. It is precisely where exact personal allegory begins, that true poetic allegory leaves off: the later parts of the *Faerie Queene* may, and in a sense must, be read key in hand, while the earlier suffice with a half-interpretation of their details. And Shakspere as a dramatic poet is singularly free from so perplexing and futile a cleverness as that with which he is in this instance credited by Mr. Halpin.

Parallels to passages in the comedy have been pointed out in the *Sonnets* and in *Venus and Adonis*. Some of the most charming among the many charming lines in the play (Helena's speech to Hermia, 'O, is it all forgot?' act iii. sc. 2) can hardly be said to bear more than a very general resemblance to a passage in Lyly's *Euphues*, with which they have been compared by Mr. Rushton, *Shakespeare's Euphuism*, p. 55. An exquisite figure, together with a striking epithet to be found in the play, recurs in two lines cited by Mr. Stokes from *The Wisdom of Doctor Dodipoll*, a play published in 1600, but alluded to in 1596:

> 'Where the light fairies danced upon the flowers,
> *Hanging in every leaf an orient pearl.*'

The humorous device of the perversion of the sense of the Prologue to the tradesmen's play by mispunctuation is as old as *Ralph Roister Doister*. (For a comic view of Elisabethan interpunctuation, see Middleton's *More Dissemblers besides Women*, act iii. sc. 2.)

The popularity of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* has survived the critical opinion of Pepys, who saw it acted on Sept. 29, 1662, and recorded his resolution, though he had never seen it before, never to see it again, 'for it is the most insipid, ridiculous play that ever I saw in my life.' It has been altered and adapted for the stage with unusual frequency, chiefly in a more or less operatic form. Mendelssohn's overture to the play was composed in 1826, and the rest of the music, including the favourite Wedding March, in 1843.

(9) THE TAMING OF THE SHREW. † (?). II b. *Mal.* 11.

No external evidence exists as to the date of this play. That it was not mentioned by Meres, may or may not be accounted for by the supposition that he did not regard it as Shakspere's original work. (That Meres mentioned it under the name of *Love's Labour Won* is a theory which assuredly needs no confutation.) The occurrence in it of a phrase which coincides with the title of a play by Thomas Heywood, printed in 1607, but certainly acted in 1603 ('This is the way to kill a wife with kindness,' act iv. sc. 2), admits of the obvious explanation that the phrase in question was proverbial, or at least in popular use, before it was employed by Heywood. All questions as to style and manner of dramatic treatment are subordinate to, or involved in, that concerning the relations of this play to another, which cannot on external evidence be asserted to have been an earlier piece. This is the play which, under the title of *A Pleasant Conceited Historie, called the Taming of a Shrew* (to be cited in the following as *A Shrew*, by way of distinction from *The Taming of the Shrew* first printed in the First Folio of 1623), was first printed in 1594, 'as it was sundry times acted by the Earle of Pembrook his servants.' Further editions appeared in 1596 and 1607, from which latter impression the play was reprinted in the *Six Old Plays* (1779); the edition by the late Mr. Thomas Amyot in the *Publications of the* (old) *Shakespeare Society* (1844) is from the earliest (1594) text. The publisher of the 1607 edition (Ling), to whom the publisher of those of 1594 and 1596 (Burby) had transferred his rights in this play, as well as in *Love's Labour's Lost* and in *Romeo and Juliet*, in the same year (1607) transferred his rights in *A Shrew* to yet another publisher (Smethwicke); but when the latter, who was associated in the publication of the First Folio, in 1631 printed a further *Shrew* quarto, it was *The* and not *A Shrew* which he chose for the text. These facts have been held to suggest that in 1607, and even in 1594 and 1596, *A Shrew* was 'believed to be Shakspere's in some sense,' although Shakspere had no connexion with Pembroke's company, and although *A Shrew*, in 1607, was published with Shakspere's name. (Stokes, pp. 34–5.)

The sense in which *A Shrew* was believed to be Shakspere's, must have been either that it was wholly by him or that he had been a contributor to it. The former supposition, approved by Pope, few will at the present day be found prepared to adopt. The other might be held in several different ways; but all of them seem to me, in different degrees, repugnant to probability. The late Mr. Hickson seems to have thought that *A Shrew* was a version, by another hand, of *The Shrew* as originally written by Shakspere; but the fact of such retrogressive workmanship would require overwhelming external proof; and the dramaturgic discovery, that adequate provision is made in *A Shrew*, but not in *The Shrew*, for getting Sly off the stage does not tell very significantly in the direction of improvement. The conjecture that *A Shrew* and *The Shrew* were alike founded upon a previous play, and that this was an early work of Shakspere's, written before he was acquainted with, or had thought of availing himself of, Gascoigne's *Supposes* (printed in 1566, and again in 1587), seems to me almost equally improbable; but it deserves notice as having commended itself to ten Brinck, although I am not aware that he ever did more than announce his preference for it. (See *Jahrbuch*, vol. xiii, 1878, p. 94.) There remains the hypothesis that *A Shrew* was an early production of Shakspere's afterwards elaborated by him in the form of *The Shrew*; but apart from the circumstance of the former having been acted by Pembroke's company, I fail to see in it any features distinctive of Shakspere's genius, or of his manner in any play known to be his. Nearly all the considerations urged by Mr. Fleay against Shakspere's substantial authorship of *The Shrew* (see his paper on the subject in *Transactions of the New Shakspere Society*, 1874) likewise hold good as against his authorship of any part of *A Shrew*, although not all are equally convincing. *A Shrew*, and *The Shrew* also, seem however to show that the old material of an earlier play, archaic alike in versification and in general style of humour, was adorned by the hand of some other dramatist than Shakspere with numerous passages of poetic dialogue distinctly standing forth from the rest. The style of these passages is palpably either that of Marlowe—'Marlowe,' as it is well put by Professor Brown (cited *ap.* Grosart, Introduction to the *Life and Complete Works of Robert Greene, Huth Library*, vol. i. p. xlvi), 'in a weak, self-repeating humour,'—or, as seems to me far more probable, that of some contemporary writer capable of imitating Marlowe, and not disdaining to plagiarise from him. On the other hand, I cannot attach much significance to the resemblance which has been traced to the manner of Greene in some of the comic passages of the play.

We may now pass from *A Shrew* to *The Shrew*, which is constructed on the same general lines as the former, as regards both the *Induction* and the play itself. The incident, savouring of the *Errors* species, of the Pedant's personation of Vincentio, which Dyce says is not included in *A Shrew*, is suggested there (see Amyot's edn., p. 32); but the piquancy of the situation in *The Shrew*, where the personation takes place in the presence of the personated father, is wanting. On the other hand, the scenes concerned with the rivalry among Bianca's three suitors are additions. Few will, I think, differ from the conclusion advanced by Mr. Fleay in the paper already cited, that Shakspere's authorship of those passages of the play, especially in acts iv and v, which are proper to Katherine and Petruchio, is indisputable. Manifestly, no writer of the age but he could have lit up the rather barren close of a rather trivial action by a passage such as that containing the famous line—

> 'A woman moved is like a fountain troubled.'

(Act v. sc. 2.) Nor can the raciness of such dialogue as that in act ii. sc. 1, tinged though it be with some of the coarseness that must have been characteristic of the original play, be owing to any invention but his who excelled in this species of wit-combat. (I can hardly suppose that the phrase in this scene 'Kate of Kate Hall' will be held to prove that its author was a Cambridge man.) On the other hand, Mr. Fleay has perhaps been less successful in his attempt to show that Shakspere's handiwork in *The Shrew* was confined to those parts of the play in which Katherine and Petruchio are on the stage together. This has, I think, been shown by Dr. Furnivall, in his criticism of Mr. Fleay's paper, *u. s.*, more especially in regard to Shakspere's re-touching, with its Warwickshire allusions, of the *Induction*, and to his responsibility for the character of Grumio. To my mind, *The Shrew* as a whole underwent a process of re-touching, which it seems unnecessary to ascribe in part to a different workmanship from that which produced the scenes in their present form between the hero and heroine. Among Mr. Fleay's arguments against Shakspere's authorship of the play as a whole are these: that no play ascertained to be his has an Induction; that all the characters are taken from the middle class, and that there is neither a duke nor a king in the play (which, however, fulfils the second, though not the first, of the two requirements mentioned in the Prologue to Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Woman-Hater*: 'A Duke there is, and the scene lies in Italy, as these two things lightly we never miss'); that *The Shrew* is the only comedy believed to be Shakspere's which has a regular plot and a downright moral, and which besides being restricted in purpose is unpleasing in tone; and, finally, that it was ridiculed by Fletcher in *The Woman's Prize*, or *The Tamer Tamed*, which would clash with certain widely-accepted theories as to Shakspere's having co-operated with Fletcher in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, and as to Fletcher's having remodelled *Henry VIII.* But I hardly consider the above a correct description of the purpose of Fletcher's play (as to which see below), inasmuch as its design is rather to 'cap' the theme of *The Shrew*, than to render it ridiculous. These and other arguments, the sum of which Mr. Fleay candidly allows to fall short in themselves of a convincing demonstration, are reinforced by him with what he regards as more potent evidence. So far, however, as this consists in the large number of defective and irregular lines to be found in the play, or in the abundant employment in it of words (some of them Italian) not to be found in plays of undoubted Shaksperean origin, or in the use of classicisms foreign to Shakspere's manner, it is not destructive of what seems on the whole the most probable conclusion as to the history of *The Shrew's* origin. In it we seem to have a play re-cast by Shakspere from another (*The Taming of a Shrew* aforesaid) which had itself been adapted by an imitator of Marlowe from a yet earlier production. To a work of so composite an origin it seems accordingly useless to apply tests appropriately used in connexion with plays, or parts of plays, undoubtedly, or at least very probably, written by Shakspere alone.

Under these circumstances any attempt to fix the date of *The Shrew*, except within relatively wide limits, may be well regarded as hopeless. External evidence we have none; for there is nothing to show whether the play revived by Dekker in 1602, under the title of *Medicine for a Curst Wife*, was *A Shrew* or *The Shrew*, if indeed it was either. It is the former, according to Collier (vol. ii. p. 761), which is mentioned by Sir John Harington in his *Metamorphosis of Ajax*, printed in 1596. We may suppose, though without certainty, that it was *The Shrew* to which Samuel Rowlands alluded in the lines in his *Whole Crew of Kind Gossips*:

> 'The chiefest Art I have I will bestow
> About a worke cald taming of the Shrew.'

(See *Centurie of Prayse*, p. 85.) Of allusions in the text to contemporary events not more than one has been thought discoverable, but the 'staying of ships' by way of retaliation (see act iv. sc. 2) was too common an incident of Plantagenet and Tudor commercial history to warrant a special application. Inasmuch as the evidence of diction and versification seems to be more or less put out of court, we can only fall back upon general considerations as to dramatic treatment. Dr. Furnivall justly finds 'links' between *The Shrew* and *The Comedy of Errors*, on the one hand, and *Part I* of *Henry IV* (Hotspur's scene with his Kate)—but this, according to his own table, would leave a margin of date between 1589 *c.* and 1596–7. Other critics have assigned to it considerably later dates; but I perceive no reason in the present instance for accepting their guidance. On the whole, therefore, I hold it to be allowable to leave this comedy in the place which seems best to fit it among the works with which Shakspere was connected as an author—among the early comedies, to which in the essence of its dramatic treatment it belongs.

As to the original sources of the action of the play—for the most part, but not entirely, common to it and *The Taming of a Shrew*—the following notes may be added:—

1. The idea of the Prelude and Interlude is very ancient, although it does not appear whence it was derived by the English playwright who first adopted it. Simrock mentions an anecdote of a precisely similar jest or hoax attributed to Philip the Good of Burgundy, in Goulart's *Thrésor d'histoires admirables et merveilleuses de notre temps* (1607); and it is remarkable that a merry comedy is here said to have been acted before the pseudo-Duke. Goulart, he conjectures, derived the story from Heuterus *de rebus burgundicis*, whence Burton reproduced it in his *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621). It is said to have already made its appearance in England in a collection of jests continued by R. Edwards, and printed in 1570. Halliwell-Phillipps has further compared part of Sir R. Barckley's *Discourse on the Felicitie of Man* (1596). The date of the ballad on the subject printed in Percy's *Reliques* is unknown.

But the origin of the story has been traced further back; every one remembers its occurrence in the *Arabian Nights*, and it has been suggested that the trick was first told to the Duke of Burgundy by one of the Eastern embassies which visited his Court, and repeated by him in imitation of the good Chaliph Haroun Alraschid. I cannot see any very striking resemblance in the famous anecdote of Dionysius and Damocles, as referred to by

Cicero (*Tusc. Disp.* v. 21). Steevens, however, pointed out a curiously parallel passage to one in Shakspere's Induction.

Calderon's *Life's a Dream* is based on a similar idea; and the plot of the Induction has been too frequently reproduced on the stage to make enumeration possible.

2. The main action of the comedy, viz. the cure of the shrew, is to be found in the *Notti piacevoli* of Straparola (viii. 2), first published at Venice in 1550; and also in two old Spanish novels in *El Conde Lucanor*, by Don Juan Manuel, a prince of Castile (published apparently 1643). A still closer resemblance is traceable in an old Danish story, printed by Köhler in *Jahrbuch*, vol. iii (1868). In fact, as Simrock says, the story is the common property of a variety of ages and peoples, and may be traced in a Persian, as well as in Old-German sources. There is an old German play, by Hans Sachs, on the subject; and in Basile's *Pentamerone* (a collection of Neapolitan stories) there is one on a similar theme, in which however the transition to the story of *Patient Grissel* is already recognisable. Lastly, the old English '*merry jeste*' of '*the Wife lapped in Morels Skin*' (reprinted by Amyot, *u. s.*) seems to have been printed between 1550 and 1560; its resemblance to the story of the plays is also merely general.

As there is no proof of the author of the *Taming of a Shrew* having been a reader of Straparola, it cannot be determined in what form the story first reached him.

3. The episode of Bianca and Lucentio forms, as already stated, part of what was added to the earlier play by Shakspere. It is taken directly from the fourth and fifth acts (see Klein, iv. 338 *seqq.*) of Ariosto's *Gli Suppositi*, translated by Gascoigne; and as both Klein and Simrock point out, Shakspere has nowhere borrowed with less important modifications.

A contributor to the (old) *Shakespeare Society's Papers* (vol. i. p. 80), signing himself 'F. S. A.,' discovered a ballad with the burden 'We will be married o' Sunday,' which words he thinks Petruchio (ii. 1) uses as a quotation, since, 'in fact, that does not appear to have been the day on which he intended to be united to Katherine.'

Amyot mentions the curious fact that, notwithstanding the great popularity of the play both before and after its remodelling, it is not known to have been acted from the re-opening of the theatres at the Restoration to the year 1844, except as an adaptation by Garrick in 1754 in the shape of an after-piece in three acts, of which the action was confined to so much of it as relates to *Katherine and Petruchio*. (See Genest, vol. iv. pp. 387 and 450, where it is stated that in 1810 Kemble restored the title of *The Taming of the Shrew.*) He adds, however, that in 1828 an attempt was made to restore the double plots to the stage, in the form of an opera, written by (Frederic) Reynolds. Modern playgoers would probably desire to add to Dr. Furnivall's reminiscences of the performances—in one shape or another—of one of the most long-lived of English farces.

(10) RICHARD III. I d. *Mal.* 7. E. and P. 1597. M.

I propose to take another opportunity of commenting on the relation of this tragedy to its sources, as illustrating the whole question of Shakspere's relation to the national history, of much of which his exposition has been taken on trust by so many of his countrymen in successive generations. For such a purpose this genuinely popular play seems peculiarly fitted, forming as it does, in the felicitous words of Oechelhäuser (see his essay *Über Richard III*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. iii, 1868), 'the significant boundary-stone that separates the productions of Shakspere's youth from the immortal works of the period of his full splendour.' Shakspere's main authority in this tragedy was Holinshed's *Chronicle of England, Scotland and Ireland* (1577), although he may also have referred to Halle's *Union of the two Noble illustrious Families of Lancaster and York* (1542; and continued by Grafton, 1569, from the Wars of the Roses to the end of the reign of Henry VIII). In Holinshed, the use of two versions of the career of Richard of Gloucester is traceable, the one down to the death of Edward IV; in the other, which was that which Shakspere here substantially followed, is exhibited the Richard, whose figure long remained fixed in popular tradition. (Cf. the assertion of Sir William Cornwallis (1600), *Centurie of Prayse*, p. 41, that 'malicious credulitie rather embraceth the partiall writings of indiscreet chroniclers and witty Play-Makers, then his [Richard's] lawes and actions, the most innocent and impartiall witnesses.') This view of Richard, common to both Holinshed and Halle, had no doubt been powerfully influenced by Sir Thomas More's *History of Edward V and Richard III*, published (incomplete) in English in 1509. The Latin edition of this work, which is believed to have formed the foundation of the English, is written in a style so inferior to the usual elegant Latinity of More, that it has been conjectured to be the work of Cardinal

Morton, Richard's adversary and Henry's Chancellor, with whom More was intimate in his youth. Mr. Gairdner, however, discovered evidence which seemed to him sufficient to prove the inadmissibility of the supposition of Morton's authorship of the Latin edition (see his Preface to *Letters and Papers illustrative of the Reigns of Richard III and Henry VII*, vol. ii. (1863), pp. xix–xx); so that the question, at the least, remains open. The strong Lancastrian partisanship of More's book, from which whole passages were taken over *verbatim* by Holinshed and Halle, remains, of course, incontestable. Whether or not the conception of the portrait of Richard, with which More may be said to have inspired Shakspere, was, in its essence, historically true or false, is a question alien to literary criticism. (The subject, which was discussed by the late Professor R. Pauli, in his *König Richard III*, *Aufsätze zur Englischen Geschichte*, 1869, has been reviewed at greater length by Mr. Gairdner in his *History of the Life and Reign of Richard III* (1878), in the Preface to which he records his impression, that 'a minute study of the facts of Richard's life has tended more and more to convince him of the general fidelity of the portrait with which we have been made familiar by Shakespeare and Sir Thomas More.')

The date of *Richard III* must, in the main, be determined by the position to be assigned to it, on broad critical grounds, in the series of the dramas on subjects from our national history of which Shakspere was the author, or in which he had a hand. There is no indication that *Richard III* owed anything to plays on the same subject previously acted or printed. Dr. Thomas Legge (afterwards Vice-Chancellor of his University) composed a Latin drama entitled *Richardus Tertius* (performed at St. John's College, Cambridge, in 1583, and mentioned by Sir John Harington in his *Apologie of Poetrie*, 1591; cf. Thomas Heywood's *Apology for Actors*, Bk. iii). Of superior significance is the publication, in 1594, of an English play called *The True Tragedie of Richard III, with* (lastly) *the conjunction and joining of the two noble houses, Lancaster and Yorke; as it was playd by the Queene's Majesties Players.* Neither of these works, however, both of which are reprinted in the (old) *Shakespeare Society's Publications*, 1844, contains anything of importance in common with Shakspere's play, which most certainly owed nothing to that acted by the Queen's Company. There is, again, nothing in Shakspere's *Richard III*, so far as I am aware, to connect it with any non-dramatic work of the period to which the first impression of it belongs. It was entered on the Stationers'

Registers, and printed in quarto, in 1597, and again in 1598, 1602, 1605, 1612 and 1622. Its enduring popularity is shown by the fact that, after it had been included in the Folio of 1623, it was again printed in quarto in 1629 and 1634.

The determination of the relations between the quarto and the first folio editions of this tragedy forms one of the chief *cruces* of Shaksperean textual criticism. While each of the quarto editions anterior to the First Folio is based on the preceding quarto edition, the twofold fact remains that the first quarto is on the whole superior as a text to that of the ordinary quartos of Shaksperean plays, and that the text of the folio represents a revision so minute and painstaking as to suggest the conclusion that it was based on a text different from those of the first or of any of the subsequent quartos. Among the theories proposed for the solution of this difficulty, the most notable is that supported by the authority of the Cambridge editors, who sought to explain it by supposing the author's original MS. to have undergone revision from another hand before it became the basis of the text of the first quarto, while the original MS., revised by the author himself, was again revised by a different hand (probably after the author's death), before it was made the basis of the text of the Folio. This theory has been subjected to searching criticism by both English and German scholars of the highest eminence. (See especially Spedding, *On the Corrected Edition of Richard III*, *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1875–6, pp. 1–75, who concludes that the folio text represents Shakspere's own latest revision; Delius, whose paper contributed to the *Jahrbuch*, vol. vii, 1877, is summarised by Mr. F. D. Matthew in the same volume of the *Transactions*, and who goes so far as to believe that the Folio text represents not only the genuine, but the original, text of Shakspere's play; and A. Schmidt, *Quartos und Folios von Richard III*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xv, 1880, who relegates the quartos of *Richard III*, including the third, to a place among the 'stolen and surreptitious copies maimed and deformed by the frauds of injurious impostors,' while, in accordance with Delius, he rejects the supposition of a personal revision by Shakspere of a text which had been subjected to stage variations such as the quartos represent. Mr. E. H. Pickersgill, in a long reply to Mr. Spedding, printed in *Transactions*, *u. s.*, pp. 77–123, arrives at conclusions substantially in agreement with those of the Cambridge editors.) Whatever may be the true solution of the difficulties involved in the controversy, it may assuredly be reached without resorting to the utterly improbable assumption of a late and minute revision of the text by Shakspere's own hand,—a 'blotting' on the largest scale, undertaken at the least probable epoch. Mr. Fleay has sought to make use of the undeniable circumstance that alterations and corrections were introduced into both the quarto and the folio texts, in support of his theory that in this play Shakspere derived his plot, as in *King John*, and a far more extensive portion of his text than in the case of *King John*, from an earlier play, which he believes to have been left unfinished by Marlowe at his death in 1593. (*Life of Shakespeare*, pp. 275 *seqq.*) The theory, it must be conceded, admirably suits the probable date of *Richard III*; and, which is more, it accords with the irresistible impression, that while in this tragedy we have a work which, in the subtlety of its treatment of character, and in the strength of its humour, is purely Shakspere's, much in it recalls a cruder kind of workmanship at least not wholly his. Thus, for instance, the women's scene (act iv. sc. 4) ends with a weak sort of repetition of the powerful scene between Richard and Anne (act i. sc. 2); and indeed Mr. Fleay considers the entire 'unhistorical, but grandly classical, conception of Margaret,' to be evidently due to Marlowe. (Mr. Stopford Brooke, in a paper on *Richard III* contributed to the *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1880–6, p. 513, calls Margaret 'more Greek in conception than any other figure in Shakspere.' I must frankly confess my instinctive assent to Mr. Fleay's theory—an assent perhaps rendered easier by his own avowal that he does 'not think it possible to separate Marlowe's work from Shakespeare's in this play—it is worked in with too cunning a hand.' For better or for worse, if the phrase may be used, *Richard III* seems to me inseparable from *Henry VI*, with which, although Shakspere's in a sense to be predicated neither of *Parts I* and *II* nor of *Part III*, it forms, as Mr. Fleay expresses it, one 'tetralogy.'—The fact that the famous lines in *Richard III* (act i. sc. 2)

> 'Was ever woman in this humour woo'd?
> Was ever woman in this humour won?'—

recur with variations in both the *First Part* of *Henry VI*, act v. sc. 3, and in *Titus Andronicus*, act. ii. sc. 1, may suggest that Shakspere had a share in those plays, but hardly bears on the question of the authorship of *Richard III*.

The popularity of Shakspere's play unmistakeably added to that of its historical theme; and I am disposed to agree with Mr. Ordish, *Early London Theatres*, p. 91, that Mr. Stopford Brooke goes astray in supposing it to have been imperilled by the ridicule thrown upon the Lord Mayor and Corporation in the immortal Bayard's Castle scene (act iii. sc. 7). In 1602, Henslowe (see his *Diary*, p. 223) advanced money to Ben Jonson on a play called *Richard Crook-back*, which, however, was not included in the folio edition of the poet's works, possibly because he had been aided in it by some other dramatist. In 1614 a tribute was paid by Christopher Brooke in a poem called *The Ghost of Richard the Third*, which was in fact founded on Shakspere's tragedy, to the genius which had produced that work. (Cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 497, and see the reprint of the poem in the (old) *Shakespeare's Society's Publications*, 1844; and cf. *Centurie of Prayse*, pp. 109–110, where it is pointed out that in the poem several lines are actually 'caught from' Shakspere's work.) One celebrated line in the play had become a catch-phrase as early as 1598, when we find in Marston's *Scourge of Villanie*:

> 'A man, a man, a kingdome for a man!'

In his *Parasitaster* (1606), Marston parodies the same line as follows:—

> 'A foole, a foole, my Coxcombe for a foole!'

and in his *What you Will* (1607), he quotes the 'play-scrappe' itself. (Cf. *Centurie of Prayse*, pp. 29, 77.) A *Prologue* and *Epilogue* to *Richard III*, written to 'incourage a young Witty Lad' who played the principal part at the Red Bull, will be found in Thomas Heywood's *Pleasant Dialogues and Dramas* (1637; reprinted in his *Collected Works*, vol. vi. pp. 352–3. Cf. Collier, vol. iii. p. 234). Thomas Heywood himself, as will be seen below, treated a portion of the story of *Richard III* in the *Second Part* of his *King Edward IV*. A *Richard III*, by Samuel Rowley, mentioned by Sir Henry Herbert under the date of 1623, is not extant.

I have already referred to Colley Cibber's version of this tragedy, which has not yet been banished from the stage (cf. vol. i. p. 515, *ante*). The story of the murder of the princes was, in 1833, treated by Casimir Delavigne in *Les Enfants d'Édouard*, a play of some note in French theatrical history.

(11) KING JOHN. II a. *Mal.* 13. M.

This is the only play of which Shakspere's authorship has remained uncontested that was not entered on the Stationers' Register;

nor is it known to have been printed before the Folio of 1623. Malone's attempt to fix its date in 1596 has recently been renewed by Mr. Fleay; but the circumstantial evidence on the subject is not overwhelming, and is by no means irreconcileable with the conclusion, with which the tests of versification fairly agree, that the play belongs to the same period of Shakspere's productivity as *Richard II*, and may be dated about the same time, probably rather earlier. The general looseness of texture observable in the construction of this play, and its great flow of oratorial speech, point to the same conclusion, and, in point of fact, Schlegel described its position among Shakspere's historical plays in terms not very dissimilar from those cited above with regard to *Richard III* (cf. Stokes, p. 43). Malone conceived the lamentations of Constance over the death of Arthur (act. iii. sc. 4) to have been perhaps suggested by the death of Shakspere's son Hamnet in that year, and Chatillon's praise of the English fleet (act ii. sc. 1) to allude to the great fleet fitted out against Spain in the same year. A line quoted from *The Spanish Tragedy*, and an allusion to one in *Solyman and Perseda*, tell in favour of an earlier date than 1596; a supposed imitation (in a speech of Faulconbridge's, act. ii. sc. 1) from the old *Play of Stucley* is thought by Mr. Fleay most likely to have suggested a passage in the latter, the date of which has moreover been disputed. (It was not published till 1605, but probably acted several years before; Dyce (Introduction to Peele's *Battle of Alcazar*) and Mr. Fleay think, in 1596.) I think it unnecessary to refer to certain other supposed historical or political allusions (including a fancied analogy between King John and Hubert and Queen Elisabeth and Secretary Davison), inasmuch as none of them has been brought home with precision to any particular occasion,—any more than the

> 'proud river peering o'er its bounds'

(act iii. sc. 1),—a line borrowed by Marston in his *Insatiate Countess*, 1603,—need refer to the great rains and 'high waters' of 1594–5, recorded by Stowe.

The chief source of this play (which in all cases of divergence Shakspere prefers to Holinshed) is *The Troublesome Raigne of King John, &c.*, which appeared anonymously in 1591, and which has been already adverted to (*ante*, vol. i. pp. 203–4). The old play is in two parts; but Shakspere has compressed nearly all its incidents into his five acts, with the exception of one episode very judiciously omitted, viz. that of Faulconbridge's 'unmasking of the monastic system';—for such it may have seemed to enthusiastically Protestant spectators. The old play was in 1611 reprinted, as a bookseller's speculation, with the initials *W. Sh.*, which in a third edition (1622) duly became *W. Shakespeare.* Bale's *Kynge Johan* (*ante*, vol. i. pp. 177 *seqq.*) appears to have been unknown both to the author or authors of this play and to Shakspere.

(12) RICHARD II. I d. *Mal. 6.* E. and P. 1597. M.

First printed in 1597, and again in 1598, this play was republished in 1608 'with new additions to the Parliament Sceane and the deposing of King Richard,' and was in this form again printed in 1615. The 'additions' consisted, at all events in substance, of vv. 154–318 of act iv. sc. 1, which comprise the 'woeful pageant' of Richard II's actual deposition referred to in the immediately subsequent passage of the play. It does not necessarily follow that the omission was due to the outbreak of 1601. (Sir John Hayward's historical work, entitled *The First Part of the Life and Raigne of Henrie the IV, extending to the first yeare of his raigne*, which was published early in 1599, with a dedication to Essex, led to the imprisonment of the author, even after the dedication had been removed. See Mr. S. L. Lee's notice of Hayward in vol. xxv, 1891, of the *Dictionary of National Biography*, and cf. Fleay, *Life of Shakespeare*, p. 187.) Mr. Fleay's supposition, that the abdication scene in *Richard II* was omitted because of the publication of the Papal Bull of deposition in 1596, must however, in the absence of further evidence, be dismissed.—Information is unluckily wanting as to the shape in which Shakspere's play was acted after dinner on board ship off Sierra Leone by Captain Keeling's companions, on the occasion of a visit from 'Captain Hawkins,' in September, 1608 (*Centurie of Prayse*, p. 79).—*Richard II* manifestly belongs to a later date of composition than *Henry VI*, and also, as it seems to me, than *Richard III.* A different opinion, however, is held not only by Mr. Fleay, but also by Dr. Furnivall and Mr. Swinburne, who, according to Mr. Stokes, 'appears to consider *Richard II* the earliest of Shakespeare's historical plays.' The rime-test certainly supports this notable *consensus*, according to which *Richard II* was written after *Richard III*, and even after *King John.* While, however, the absence of prose, and the freedom of a highly-strung diction from the affectation of such classical allusions as abound in *Henry VI*, indicate the conclusion that these three plays are to be grouped together, *Richard II* appears to me to exhibit a marked advance upon *King John*, and even more so upon *Richard III*, both in the matureness of the poetic treatment—I might say, of the poetic conception—of its theme, and in its greater depth of style. The latter advance is the more striking, since in *Richard II* Shakspere certainly had before him the example of Marlowe's *Edward II*, just as I am inclined to believe that his *Richard III* profited by the existence of an earlier play (though incomplete) from the same hand. I am, accordingly, disposed to assign to *Richard II* much the same date as that given to it by Malone—the year 1593—though I cannot bring myself to believe the play to have been prior in composition to *Richard III* and *King John*.

Shakspere's principal, if not his sole, authority in this play was Holinshed, of whom Messrs. Clark and Wright in their (Clarendon Press) edition show him to have used the second edition, published in 1586–7. Here and there, he may have gone to other sources; thus, a touch in act v. sc. 2 is traceable to Halle. Charles Knight and Grant White have dwelt on some coincidences between this play and Samuel Daniel's epical poem of the *Civil Wars*, of which the portion concerning the fate of Richard II appeared in the second edition (1595); but neither Delius nor the Clarendon Press editors regard these coincidences as salient; and if Shakspere's play was written as early as 1593, Daniel may have borrowed from him, instead of *vice versâ*.

Mr. Stokes (p. 44) states that 'a play, anterior to Shakspere's, entitled *The Tragedy of Richard II*, concluding with the murder of the Duke of Gloster at Calais,' has been recently printed from an old MS. Of this I know nothing. Whether or not the celebrated mention in Camden's *Annals* of an '*exoleta tragoedia de tragica abdicatione Richardi Secundi*,' there said to have been performed at a public theatre, on payment made, before partisans in Essex's conspiracy, refers to Shakspere's play, is a question of considerable difficulty. At first sight, it might seem, from the nature of the case, as if the play in question could not have been Shakspere's tragedy, where the good-will of the audience is claimed, not for the conspirators, but for the sovereign on the throne. It is however certain that, in Mr. Lee's words (*u. s.*), 'the story of Richard II's deposition had long exercised a mysterious fascination over Essex,' and that the Queen's suspicions had been aroused in the same connexion on a previous occasion. From the examinations of Sir Gilly (or Gillam) Merrick and Augustine Phillipps, one of the Lord Chamberlain's men, on February 17 and 18, 1601, it appears that the former, with Lord Monteagle and other gentlemen of Essex's following, on the evening before the outbreak of the insurrection, were induced by Sir Charles Percy to go all together 'to the Globe over the water wher the L. Chamberlens men vse to play,' and that they were 'ther somewhat before the play began, S^r^ Charles tellyng them that the play wold be of Harry the IIII^th^.' But Sir Gilly Merrick goes on to say that the play performed on the occasion 'was of Kyng Harry the IIII^th^, and of the kyllyng of Kyng Richard the second'; and this description is repeated by Augustine Phillipps, who adds that he and his fellows intended 'to have played some other play, holdyng that play of Kyng Richard to be so old and so long out of vse as that they shold have small or no Company at yt,' but that they were induced to do so by Sir Charles Percy and the rest, who offered them 'xl*s*. more then their ordynary for yt.' Moreover, as has been pointed out by Dr. Hales, Bacon, in his *Declaration of the Practices and Treasons of Essex, &c.*, gives the play its true name. Inasmuch as Augustine Phillipps was a member of Shakspere's company, there can be no reasonable doubt but that the play acted on the eve of the outbreak was Shakspere's *Richard II.* (This conclusion was first established by Dr. Hales in a letter to *The Academy*, dated November 20, 1875; see also Halliwell-Phillipps' *Outlines*, vol. i. pp. 174 *seqq.*; more doubtfully, Collier, vol. i. p. 301. The depositions of Merrick and Phillipps are printed at length in *Centurie of Prayse*, pp. 35–6; from a letter supposed to date from about the year 1600, and printed *ib.* p. 38, it appears that Sir Charles Percy, the companion of Essex who instigated the performance of *Richard II*, was acquainted with *Henry IV*, since he alludes to Justice Silence and Justice Shallow.)

Dr. Simon Forman, in his notes headed *The Booke of Plaies and Notes [of their] performans for Common Pollicie* (preserved in the Bodleian, and reprinted in Appendix II to *Transactions of the New Shakspere Society*, 1875), states that he saw *Richard II* performed at the Globe on April 30, 1611; but his account of the play seen by him, states that it contained the death of 'Iack straw' and other matters not to be found in Shakspere's play; it was, therefore, a different production—according to Mr. Fleay it was the old play called *The Life and Death of Jack Straw, a Notable Rebel, &c.*,

which was entered on the Stationers' Register in 1593, and which he ascribes to Peele (*The English Drama*, vol. ii. p. 153). This play I have not seen.

Mr. W. Beamont in 1870 published at Chester a pamphlet called *Richard II, an Attempt to Connect some Cheshire Places, Circumstances, &c., with Shakspere's Drama.*

Richard II was much altered by Wroughton for representation in 1815, having already undergone the manipulation of Tate, Theobald, and Goodhall. It was revived with great success by the late Mr. Charles Kean in 1857; a more recent performance—almost without scenery—by Mr. Louis Calvert, showed how much of its effect depends upon the numerous passages contained in it, which, as was well said by the late Henry Morley, have 'floated out of their place in the drama to live in the minds of the people.'

(13) THE MERCHANT OF VENICE. II a. *Mal.* 9. M. E. 1598. P. 1600.

This play, twice printed in 1600 by Robertes and Heyes respectively, stands last in the list of Shakspere's comedies mentioned by Meres in 1598; but, inasmuch as the last of the tragedies mentioned by him as Shakspere's is the undoubtedly early *Titus Andronicus*, the circumstance has no bearing on the question of the relative dates of *The Merchant* and of the other comedies in his list. Henslowe's *Diary* mentions *The Venesyon Comodey* as a new play on August 25, 1594, after which date he frequently notices its repetition; and the question arises whether this was Shakspere's play. The Lord Chamberlain's men were in this year acting with the Lord Admiral's; and Robertes' entry in the Stationers' Register of Shakspere's play designates it as *A booke of the Merchaunt of Venyse, otherwise called the Jewe of Venyse*, so that the play might well have been known by the local appellation. (Another play is noticed as 'new' in the following month by Henslowe under the bewildering designation of *Venesyn and the love of and Ingleshe Lady*.) In September, 1593, however, there was entered on the Stationers' Register *The Jew of Venice*, by Thomas Dekker (with which Mr. Fleay, on insufficient grounds, supposes *The French Doctor*, first mentioned by Henslowe in October, 1594, to have been identical); and it is conceivable that this, and not Shakspere's play, was '*The Venetian Comedy*.'

The famous passage in act v. sc. 1, 'In such a night,' &c., is adapted in *Wily Beguiled*, which contains one or two other allusions to *The Merchant of Venice* and *Romeo and Juliet*; but the date of this comedy cannot be established with certainty (see below). In Munday's translation of Alexander Silvayn's *Orator* (1596), the ninety-fifth Declamation treats of a Jew who would for his debt have a pound of the flesh of a Christian (see Warton's *History of English Poetry*, sec. 60; the 'Declamation' is reprinted in vol. ii. of Collier's *Shakespeare's Library*); but it is of course possible that Shakspere may have had earlier access to the French original, of which a selected translation was entered on the Register already in 1590. The ballad of *Gernutus a Jew* (printed in Percy's *Reliques*), entered on the Register in 1598, on the same day as Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, was probably in circulation before the production of Shakspere's play, which, in that case, may have taken from it some hints; if so, the ballad was, as it professes to have been, derived directly from an Italian source. There can, however, be no certainty on the subject, and many critics have thought the play later than the ballad. As to Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, I have above (vol. i. pp. 345 *seqq.*) discussed at length the resemblances between it and *The Merchant of Venice*, which seem to me to prove conclusively that the composition of Shakspere's was influenced by Marlowe's play. In argument, however, they were altogether different from one another. Of the early play, on the other hand, mentioned by Stephen Gosson in his *Schoole of Abuse* (1579), and described by him as 'representing the greedinesse of worldly chusers, and bloody mindes of usurers,' it is difficult to suppose that it did not, in germ at least, contain both the plots of Shakspere's play. The story of the bond seems further alluded to, in 1579, in a letter from Spenser to Gabriel Harvey. (Cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 377, and see *ib.*, and p. 375 note as to previous English stage Jews.)

Nothing in the above-mentioned circumstances can be held to indicate with any approach of certainty the date of *The Merchant of Venice*; nor, again, need much importance be attached to Malone's conjecture that a passage in the play (act iii. sc. 2) probably alludes to the description of the ceremonies accompanying the coronation of Henry IV of France, which took place in 1594, and was narrated in an English pamphlet, *The Order of Ceremonies, &c.*, translated from the French and published in London. It may be doubted whether another event, of a very different nature, which occurred in 1594, and which has an interest not to be disconnected from the subject of *The Merchant of Venice*, has any more certain bearing upon the question of its date. This was the hanging, in London, of Dr. Roderigo Lopez, a Portuguese physician of Jewish descent—who had for some years been established in London, and had been held in high repute there—for a supposed design against the life of Queen Elisabeth. As is allowed by Mr. S. L. Lee (to whose very remarkable researches on the Jews in Elisabethan England reference has been made *ante*, vol. i. p. 343 note, and who had previously discussed *The Original of Shylock* in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for February, 1880; cf. Dr. Hönigmann's essay in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xvii, 1882) there is very little special evidence in the play to show that the case or character of Lopez was in Shakspere's mind when he drew his Shylock. The most striking coincidence is, in fact, to be found in the name Antonio, as borne by Shakspere's merchant and the 'King Antonio' (the Portuguese pretender), to whose enmity against his former friend Lopez the ruin of the latter seems traceable. Neither in the character of Shylock (except maybe in certain mitigating traits), nor in any feature of the plot, is a resemblance discoverable to any feature of the transactions by which the name of Dr. Lopez became notorious. Shylock—the name is said to have been taken from a pamphlet of unknown date, called *Caleb Shillocke His Prophecie, or The Jewes Prediction*, but this may be regarded as doubtful—was neither the first nor the last caricature of the Jewish usurer known to the English stage. It is not improbable that Shakspere should have introduced such a character into a comedy of the year 1594—when the case of Dr. Lopez must have added popularity to any vilification of the Jews (although the *Jew of Malta* seems to have declined in popularity in this very year; see Henslowe's *Diary*, p. 43). But he could hardly have done so in time for the conception, composition, and production of the piece called by Henslowe *The Venetian Comedy*, which, as has been seen, was first performed in August, 1594; since the execution of Lopez seems, at the earliest, to have taken place in the previous June.

The versification and style of this comedy alike point to a date later, but not much later, than those of Shakspere's comedies which belong to the group that has been already noticed. *The Merchant of Venice* contains a less proportion of rime than any of these, if allowance be made for the short metre of the casket-scenes; and, though the classical allusions in it are more abundant than ever, they are introduced without effort, and apparently without design.

The strength, grace, and flexibility of the composition are those of Shakspere's happiest dramatic period, in which all tentativeness of manner or method lay already behind him. I can, on reconsideration, no longer conclude this play to have been written at so early a date as 1594.

As to the sources of his plot and under-plot, which he has interwoven with so effective a skill, it can hardly be doubted that Shakspere was indebted both for the story of the bond and for that of the caskets to an earlier play. While there is no reason against supposing this to have been the old play of which the argument is described by Gosson, there is no warrant for Mr. Fleay's assertion that it was the *Jew of Venice* ascribed by him to Dekker. I may add that Mr. Fleay assumes too much in describing the old German play, called *The Well Delivered Judgment of a Female Student* or *The Jew of Venice*, as a version of such an earlier English piece. (This very amusing but far from refined concoction is printed by J. Meissner, *Die Englischen Comoedianten zur Zeit Shakespeares in Oesterreich* (Vienna, 1884), pp. 131 *seqq.* from a MS. of 1689. It appears that the play was in substance that produced under the name *Of a King in Cyprus and A Duke in Venice*, at Graz, in 1608, by the well-known manager John Green. The latter part of this play is manifestly based on *The Merchant of Venice* itself; the gross buffoonery, with which it is stuffed, had its origin in gag for the Carnival, much of which seems of native growth, and later in diction than suits the days of the English Comedians. It is curious that the Jew, whose name at first is *Barrabas* [sic], is afterwards called Joseph. (Cf. also J. Bolte, *Der Jude von Venetien*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xxii, 1887, who has discovered a second text of the play in the Grand Ducal Library at Karlsruhe.)

Of the stories which make up the double-plot of *The Merchant of Venice*:

1. That of the bond is traceable, as was nearly simultaneously discovered by Farmer, Tyrwhitt, and Lessing, to Giovanni Fiorentino's *Il Pecorone* (written as early as 1378, but not printed till 1558); here the story plays in Venice, and the lady's residence is called Belmonte. It is usually supposed that this tale (which has been reprinted, with an English translation, in vol. ii. of Collier's *Shakespeare's Library*) had been taken by the author from the *Gesta Romanorum*, the origin of which book has, on unsatisfactory evidence, been ascribed to a Poitevin author (see Douce on this supposition of Warton's, in his *Dissertation on the Gesta Romanorum*

in *Illustrations of Shakespeare*, vol. ii), but which was very probably German in its origin (*ib.* p. 353). The story is, however, stated by Sir F. Madden not to occur in the original Latin version of the *Gesta*, though it appears in an Anglo-Latin version compiled about 1390, in several Latin MS. versions of the fifteenth century, in the Augsburg impression, 1789, and in an English MS. version dating from about 1750. Moreover, in the *Gesta Romanorum*, no Jew is introduced into the story. It had, however, previously appeared, likewise without a Jew, in a Latin collection of tales called *Dolopathos*, written some time between 1179 and 1212, and rendered into French in 1223; and, with a Jew, in the English *Cursor Mundi*, a collection of Bible interspersed with other stories made in the North of this country towards the end of the thirteenth century. It is unnecessary to dwell upon earlier versions of the story in Oriental (Buddhist) legends, to which it has, together with the story of the caskets, been traced back by Benfey. (Cf. K. Elze, *Zum Kaufmann von Venedig*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. vi, 1871, p. 152.) Such reflex relations between East and West are frequently observable in the hoarding, and the revival with amplifications, of similar traditions. It is noticeable, finally, that a version of this story has been found in a MS. dated about 1320; and it may safely be concluded that it existed in the West in other forms before the *Pecorone* was written. (See Miss L. Toulmin Smith's essay on *The Bond-Story in The Merchant of Venice and a Version of it in the Cursor Mundi* in *Transactions of the New Shakspere Society*, 1875–6.) A curious parallel treatment of the story of the bond has been discovered by J. Bolte in the *Moschus* of Jacob Roseveldt, a Latin academical drama, produced by students of the University of Jena on the occasion of a wedding in 1599, the year previous to that of the first impression of Shakspere's play—so that the young Franconian must have taken the subject either from a performance of English comedians, or, as is more probable, from the story in the *Gesta*, or one of the versions of it. Moschus' rascally servant is here called Barabbas. (See *Jahrbuch*, vol. xxii, 1886.)

To return to Giovanni Fiorentino, he may have found the anecdote in an earlier version of the *Gesta* than has come into the hands of scholars; but he may also have found it elsewhere. It must, however, assuredly have reached the *Gesta* after passing through the phase of a Roman law-anecdote of ancient standing, connecting itself, as Jacob Grimm pointed out, with the old law of the Twelve Tables, according to which the creditor, if payment were not made within a certain term of days, might kill the debtor; and if there were several creditors, they might cut 'the parts, and if they cut more or less, no charge of fraud should lie.' This was already by Gellius interpreted to signify an actual cutting-up of the body; and Niebuhr (*Römische Geschichte*, ii. 670), together with many high authorities on Roman law, accepts the literal interpretation. I confess, however, that I prefer to follow Schwegler (*Römische Geschichte*, iii. 38) in understanding this clause to refer to the *sectio bonorum*, or division of property under auction, only. Whichever may have been the intention of the decemvirs, it is clear how the expression was understood in later times. Thus the *Gesta* appropriately connected the legal principle in question with the daughter of a Roman emperor, while a variety of mediaeval legends, which it is impossible to pursue, gave their versions of the anecdote. The substitution of one friend for the other, and the Jewish nationality of the usurer, were extraneous additions, although the latter may not have been due to the invention of the Italian novelist, together with the disguise of the lady of Belmonte and the device of the ring. In making the usurer a Jew, Shakspere followed his authorities, and was undoubtedly influenced by the example of previous plays, and more especially by that of Marlowe's. It will not be forgotten that usury was a sin by the law of the Church, and was prohibited under Edward VI. Although, according to the letter of the law, Jews were not legally tolerated in England under Elisabeth, I should not be slow to deduce from this fact the conclusion, either that Shakspere derived his notion of the Jewish character from travels abroad, or that he developed it out of his internal conciousness. Starting with a playwright's intention of utilising a popularly unpopular type, and not at all with that of creating a new kind of hero, or even of making Shylock the chief figure of his play (see Spedding, *The Merchant of Venice at the Prince of Wales' Theatre in* 1875 in *Reviews and Discussions*, 1879), he rendered the character human, and therefore individually interesting. But it was this very humanity of treatment which places Shakspere's Jew 'more than a century in advance of his own time' (*Mézières*).

The amour and elopement of Jessica and Lorenzo, which belong to this part of the plot, were traced by Dunlop to a *novellino* by Masuccio; but they are a kind of *motif* and incident not at all unlikely to have been derived by Shakspere from an earlier play (cf. Drake, ii. 387).

2. The story of the caskets Shakspere, or the author of the old

play, found in another passage of the *Gesta Romanorum*, or in a translation of portions of the *Gesta* by Robert Robinson, published in 1577. (See Collier's *Shakespeare's Library*, vol. ii.) It occurs in the mediaeval romance of *Balaam and Josaphat*, which, written in Greek by Joannes Damascenus about 800, circulated in a Latin version before the thirteenth century. It was retold by Vincent de Beauvais in his *Speculum Historiale*, and occurs again in the *Golden Legend* of Jacobus de Voragine, of which an English translation was printed in 1527. The story in Boccaccio's *Decamerone* (x. 1) and in Gower's *Confessio Amantis* (bk. v) has only a vague resemblance to that of the caskets (cf. Clark and Wright's edition of *The Merchant of Venice*, Introduction, pp. x–xi). The legend of the caskets may have an oriental origin; and Benfey has discovered an Indian tale bearing a certain resemblance to it. But all these early versions of the story have nothing in common with that of the *Gesta*, except the machinery of boxes or caskets, and the general moral that outward appearances are not to be trusted.

More might be added as to the sources of the stories interwoven in the plot of *The Merchant of Venice*; but it must suffice to observe that there is nothing historical in the background upon which it is enacted. If Sultan Solyman is mentioned as reigning at the time, and if Antonio's argosy was bound to the Indies, the sea-route to which was only discovered towards the end of the fifteenth century, these circumstances by no means tie down the action of the play to the beginning of the sixteenth. Portia's review of her suitors is in the style of similar passages in Shakspere and other Elisabethan writers (cf. the review or competitive examination of Sylandra's Italian, French, and English suitors in *The Anatomie of Lovers Flatteries*, a kind of supplement to Greene's *Mamillia*, in *Works*, ed. Grosart, vol. ii), and may represent a favourite diversion of Queen Elisabeth and her intimates. Gervinus has pointed out a similar comparison of foreign national characters in Sully's *Memoirs*. (In a note to a translation of a Tamil drama, *Arichandra, the Martyr of Truth* (1864), I find it stated that Indian princesses in ancient times enjoyed the privilege of holding a *Suyam Varam*, or gathering of princes, with a view to selecting from them a consort; and that a review of this kind, such as is held in the first act of this play, was supposed to furnish the poets with a signal opportunity for the exhibition of their descriptive powers.) The 'County Palatine' (*ib.*) is supposed to allude to a Polish Count Palatine, who caused a sensation, in the year 1583, in London, till he vanished in a cloud of debt.

Reference has already been made (*ante*, vol. i. p. 514) to George Granville's (Lord Lansdowne) peculiar version of Shakspere's play (1701), the design of which has perhaps been, in later times, more conscientiously, but not less completely, misinterpreted under extremely careful and 'reverential' treatment. (See Spedding, *u.s.*)

(14) ROMEO AND JULIET. I c. *Mal.* 12. M. A. 1596–7. P. 1597.

This play was printed in 1597, and again in 1599, the 1597 edition purporting to present it 'as it hath been often (with great applause) plaid publiquely by the right honourable Lord Hunsdon his servants.' Henry Lord Hunsdon, who held the office of Lord Chamberlain at the time of his death, died July 22, 1596; his son, George Lord Hunsdon, was not appointed to the Lord Chamberlainship till April, 1597, it having been held, in the interval, by W. Brooke, Lord Cobham. Now, since it can be shown, in the case of other of Shakspere's plays, to have been usual to mention the title of the office as the more honourable designation of its holder's servants, the presumption seems warranted that *Romeo and Juliet* was performed on the stage in the period between Henry Lord Hunsdon's death and George Lord Hunsdon's appointment, *i.e.* between July, 1596 and April, 1597. It does not, however, follow that the play was then *first* acted; indeed, an epigram by John Weever (printed in 1599, but held to have been written as early as 1595), refers to '*Romea-Richard*' (*sic*) among the credentials of 'honie-tongd' Shakspere's reputation (see *Centurie of Prayse*, p. 4). The conjecture of Malone, founded on a passage in Marston's *Scourge of Villanie* (see *ib.*, p. 27), where from a 'habitual play-goer's' lips is said to flow

'Naught but pure Iuliat and Romio,'

and where whatever he says is declared to be

—'warranted by Curtaine plaudeties,'

that the Curtain was the theatre in which *Romeo and Juliet* was performed, is rendered probable by the fact that the Lord Chamberlain's servants at this time performed there, although the phrase might certainly be also interpreted as applying to theatres in general. (Cf. T. F. Ordish, *Early London Theatres*, p. 98.)

One or two allusions have been noted in this play as bearing upon the question of its date. The Nurse's mention (act i. sc. 3) of the earthquake that occurred eleven years ago, has been thought to show that Shakspere was engaged upon writing *Romeo and Juliet* as early as 1591; since there was an earthquake in England on April 6, 1580. On the other hand, Hunter, with far less probability, supposed the allusion to be to an earthquake which took place near *Verona*, and destroyed Ferrara, in 1570. The reference to the pestilence (act v. sc. 2) cannot be safely traced home to the visitation of the plague in 1593, or in any particular year. Malone has also pointed out certain resemblances (in act v. sc. 3) to images in Daniel's *Complaint of Rosamond*, entered and printed in 1592, but the passages in question arise with Shaksperean spontaneousness out of the action. A not very close resemblance of a passage in *The Wisdom of Doctor Dodipole* to the famous 'Take him and cut him into little stars,' is of even less importance, considering the uncertainty of the date of that comedy, which was not printed till 1600. Finally, the late Mr. Gerald Massey must be held to have displayed an excess of ingenuity when he discovered in the Nurse's difficulty about the first letter in Romeo's name (act iv. sc. 2) a reference to (Henry) *Wr*iothesley, Earl of Southampton, to the delays in whose marriage with Elisabeth Vernon (which took place, to Queen Elisabeth's indignation, in 1598) he supposes the action of the play to allude.

Professor G. Sarrazin, *Zur Chronologie von Shakespeare's Jugenddramen*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xxix and xxx, pp. 101 *seqq.*, has directed attention to several very striking coincidences of phrase, and to a notable resemblance in style, between *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594), which he justly thinks not irreconcileable with the supposition that Shakspere conceived the first idea of his tragedy some years earlier in Italy, *if he ever was there.* Parallel passages have also been pointed out in the *Sonnets*, the composition of which may in part well have been contemporaneous with that of *Romeo and Juliet*, except on the improbable supposition of a very early date for this tragedy. Although Shakspere cannot have taken the character of the Nurse from Marlowe and Nashe's *Dido*, that play may have helped to suggest his comic treatment of the character; and to Marlowe's *Edward II* was in all probability due, however unconsciously, the conception of the splendid poetic passage in act iii. sc. 2, 'Gallop apace,' &c. (cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 349 *note*).

The text of *Romeo and Juliet* has come down to us, apart from the folios, in not less than five quarto editions, of which latter the first (1597) and the second (1599) stand in marked contrast to one another, whereas from the second is derived the third, and from this again are derived the remaining quartos and all the folios. So much has been definitively established by Tycho Mommsen, in his celebrated *Romeo und Juliet, eine kritische Ausgabe des überlieferten Doppeltextes* (Oldenburg 1859); and the circumstance that the first quarto exhibits a text in some passages shortened from that of the second, and contains some stage directions of unusual precision, has been held to point to its having been a version made for stage purposes, if not actually due to its having been taken down in writing from performance on the stage. Whether the text of the second quarto is, to all intents and purposes, Shakspere's authentic text, or whether it represents a revision made by himself and his 'fellows' after the publication of the surreptitious text of 1597, and, possibly, again transcribed before being committed to the printer—these are still disputed questions. The former theory, which is Tycho Mommsen's, has been logically developed to its extreme consequences by R. Gericke (*Romeo und Juliet nach Shakespeare's Manuscript,* in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xiv, 1879); the latter is that of the Cambridge editors, and (put into few words) of Mr. P. A. Daniel. Mr. Fleay has made the characteristically ingenious suggestion, which, however, he states to be due to his son, that the text of the second quarto was taken from the manager's, and the first from the prompter's, copy. Both these texts, together with the revised edition of the second quarto (1599), have been reprinted by Mr. P. A. Daniel as *Parallel Texts* (*New Shakspere Society's Publications*, series ii, 1874–5); the text of the first quarto (*An Excellent Conceited Tragedie*, &c.) has also been reprinted in vol. vii of the *Cambridge Shakespeare*, and in vol. i of Mr. H. H. Furness' *New Variorum* edition (1873).

The materials for this play Shakspere might have found both in Arthur Brooke's poem, *The Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Iuliet, written first in Italian by Bandell, and nowe in English by Ar. Br.* —Arthur Brooke—1562, and in Bandello's novel itself, printed in 1554, translated into French by Boisteau in his *Histoires Tragiques*, and from the French into English, under the title of *The goodly Hystory of the true and constant Loue betweene Rhomeo and Jhulietta in* 1567. (Both have been reprinted in series iii of the *New Shakspere Society's Publications*, with Introductions, by Mr. P. A.

Daniel (1875), and in vol. i of Collier's *Shakespeare's Library*, 2nd edn.; the latter had also been reprinted by Haslewood and Halliwell-Phillipps.) There can, however, be no doubt but that Shakspere's immediate source was Brooke's poem, which was itself based on Bandello's novel, but developed the character of the Nurse, and altered the conclusion. In both respects he is followed by Shakspere. (For a complete comparison between Shakspere and Brooke, see Mr. Daniel's Introduction, pp. xxii *seqq.* See also Delius, *Brooke's episches und Shakespeare's dramatisches Gedicht von Romeo und Juliet*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol xvi, 1881, and K. P. Schulze, *Die Entwicklung der Sage von Romeo und Julia*, *ib.*, vol. xi, 1876, pp. 219 *seqq.*) In the Preface to his poem (which is of great length) Brooke states: 'I saw the same argument lately set foorth on stage with more commandation then I can looke for, being there much better set forth then I have, or can doe.' One fails to perceive why, because such a play is nowhere else mentioned, Brooke should be supposed to have used the expression 'set forth on stage' in a figurative sense. Klein (vol. v. p. 443) conjectures the play to which Brooke refers to have been an imitation of Luigi Groto's Italian tragedy of *Hadriana*, which would seem to have been written before 1550. (According to the Dedication it appeared in 1578; see J. C. Walker, *Historical Memoir on Italian Tragedy*, p. 50. *note.* Walker cites some striking resemblances between this tragedy and *Romeo and Juliet.*) It was probably founded on Luigi da Porto; and as the original of the play referred to by Brooke, which possibly may have been known to Shakspere, it may be supposed to have indirectly influenced him. At all events, the resemblance between a passage in the *Hadriana* and a scene of wondrous beauty in Shakspere's play (act iii. sc. 5) seems to me more striking than Delius was willing to admit. Luigi da Porto's *Historia novellamente retrovata di due nobili Amanti*—the only novel which remains from his hand—was written in or before 1524, when it was praised by Bembo, and it was reprinted in 1535 (Luigi da Porto died in 1529). Although dating the events of his story as having happened at Verona in the first three years of the fourteenth century, he cites no more solid authority than the oral communication of a Veronese archer named Pellegrino, who, in his turn, appeals to the authority of his father; but he doubts the historical veracity of the story, inasmuch as he had read in old chronicles that the families of the Capelletti and Montecchi had always belonged to the same faction. This reminiscence is borne out by Dante, *Purgatorio*, vi. 106, where no reference is introduced to the story of the unfortunate lovers. After Luigi da Porto, the theme was treated by Gherardo Boldiero, who wrote under the name of Clizia, in a poem in *ottave rime* (1553). Shortly before this, the substance of the story had found its way into France, where it was narrated by Adrian Sevin in the dedicatory epistle of his translation of Boccaccio's *Filocopo* (1542; see Daniel, *u. s.*, pp. vii–viii, and cf. A. Cohn, *Adrian Sevin's Bearbeitung der Sage von Romeo und Julia*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xxiv, 1889). —But it was from Bandello that the story found its way into 'history,' being narrated by Girolamo della Corte in his *Istoria di Verona* (1594). The historical spuriousness of the tale is stated to have been finally established by Professor Giuseppe Todeschini in his edition of the *Lettere Storiche* of *da Porto* (1857). But, as visitors to Verona are aware, the belief in the historical truth of the story is still cherished there, by cicerones at all events; and Romeo's grave and Juliet's balcony (four storeys high) will probably long continue to attract the sympathetic pilgrimages of resolute credulity.

According to a still earlier novelist, Masaccio Salernitano, who published a novel on the subject in 1476, a quite similar event happened in Siena. Indeed Douce pursued the story still further back, and traced the episode of the sleeping-potion and the burial of the lady to the Middle-Greek romance of Xenophon Ephesius. General resemblances have been pointed out by Simrock to the stories of Pyramus and Thisbe, Hero and Leander, Tristram and Isolde, and to reproductions in old German ballads. A general resemblance has also been found to the story of *Romeo and Juliet* in the Border ballad of *The Gay Goss Hawk* and later versions of it. (Cf. K. P. Schulze, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xiii, 1878.) The entire subject of the developement of the story has been treated very fully by K. P. Schulze, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xi, 1876. As a matter of course the history of the literary treatment of the theme does not end with Shakspere. Bandello's novel, as Halliwell-Phillipps points out, was made use of by Lope de Vega in his play of *Los Castelvines y Monteses*, of which the date is before 1604 (cf. Klein, x. 341, who thinks Shakspere must have been acquainted with Lope's piece); and another Spanish play, *Los Vardos de Verona*, treats the same subject. The old German *Tragoedia von Romio und Julietta*, acted in (probably South) Germany in 1626 (printed by Cohn, *u. s.*, pp. 304 *seqq.*), is a mere version of Shakspere's tragedy; such likewise appears to be the case with a Dutch piece on the same subject,

1634. As to treatments of the story in German prose narratives of the seventeenth century, see L. H. Fischer, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xxv, 1890.) A modern Italian tragedy, *Giulietta e Romeo*, by Cesare della Valle (1826), seems based on Bandello (Klein, vii. 529, *note*).

The lines ' When griping grief,' &c., quoted by Peter (iv. 5), are from Richard Edwardes' song, *In Commendation of Musicke*, contributed to the *Paradise of Dainty Deuises*. (See Warton, *History of English Poetry*, sec. i, ii, *note*.) The ballad which, as Peter states in the same scene, his ' heart itself ' plays, has been reprinted in the (old) *Shakespeare's Society's Papers*, vol. i. pp. 13–14.

The undying popularity of Shakspere's tragedy, which Pepys (March 1, 1662) judged to be ' a play of itself the worst that ever he heard,' requires no illustration. It was changed into a tragicomedy by James Howard, and, according to Downes, ' was played alternately, Tragical one day, and Tragicomical the other, for several Days together.' (Lowe, *Betterton*, p. 90.) Even at the present day, thanks to Theophilus Cibber, Garrick, and later emendators, its concluding act has by no means settled down on the stage into the Shaksperean form. Goethe's unfortunate operatic version (1811) has been succeeded by at least one opera (with Bellini's music), which was brilliantly successful, and in which the late Johanna Wagner, as *Romeo*, achieved a memorable dramatic triumph.

(15) ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL. IIe. *Mal.* 26. M.?

The above *query* is necessary to indicate the difference of opinion which still exists as to the identity of the play mentioned by Meres as *Love's Labour's Won*. For it is under this title that Farmer first conjectured *All's Well that Ends Well* to have been extolled by Meres—a view which has been adopted by the majority of later critics. (See the line in the *Epilogue*:

> ' All is well ended if this suit is won.')

Others, however, have thought the play referred to by Meres to have been *Much Ado about Nothing* (Mr. Fleay accepts this as the most probable conjecture); *The Tempest* has been more strangely suggested; while Hertzberg and Craik were in favour of *The Taming of the Shrew*.

If the more usual view, from which I see no sufficient reason for dissenting, be adopted, the supposition of Malone that the date of the play was 1606, and indeed any supposition implying that it was produced at a later date than 1598, must, of course, fall to the ground. Mr. Fleay's observation deserves notice that a passage in act iii. sc. 6 must refer to *Jack Drum's Entertainment*, which was in all probability first acted in 1600 (see *The English Drama*, vol. ii. p. 72). I am less impressed by the suggestion, as favouring an earlier date, of K. Elze (*Zu Ende Gut, Alles Gut*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. vii, 1872) that an allusion may be found in passages of act iii to the famous ring given by Queen Elisabeth to Essex at the time of his departure on the Cadiz expedition in 1596. The story of the ring is itself quite apocryphal, and rests upon the authority of the great-granddaughter of the well-known Robert Carey, Earl of Monmouth (see Birch's *Negotiations*, &c., p. 206, *note*).—The evidence of versification and style suggests a problem of much greater interest. Ulrici considered the diction to point to an early, Hertzberg and Delius to a late, date of composition. But the recurrence in the course of the play of rimed passages where the style harmonises with the metrical form, side by side with blank verse of Shakspere's maturer type, and with a flow of prose equally excellent after its manner, has seemed to a long succession of critics to support a more complex hypothesis. Already Coleridge and Tieck considered two styles—Shakspere's earliest and his latest, as they more or less roughly put it—to be discernible in this play. Collier and Dyce arrived at much the same conclusion, which has been elaborated by Mr. Fleay, in his essay *On Certain Plays of Shakspere, of which Portions were written at different Periods of his Life*, contributed to the *Transactions of the New Shakspere Society*, 1874; cf. his *Life of Shakespeare*, pp. 216 *seqq.* The most effective statement of the case perhaps is to be found in Grant White's posthumous *Studies in Shakespeare*, pp. 46 *seqq.*, based upon previous observations in his introduction to his edition of the play (1857). Nor should evidence of a different kind be overlooked. On the one hand, there are traces early in *All's Well that Ends Well* of the influence of *Euphues*—Grant White has noted one such, and I had noted another (both in act i. sc. 1); I must, however, confess that the supposed identification of Lafeu with Lyly seems to me absurd, even apart from the fact that the 'old lord' can speak very plain English (see act ii. sc. 3). Parolles' allusion (act iv. sc. 3) to the drum which was beat 'before the English tragedians' (abroad) would no doubt suit either an earlier or later time of composition. Yet the play contains (in act i. sc. 3) two references to Puritanism, not easily reconcileable with an early date. The conclusion to which these various discrepancies point is obvious; viz. that the comedy, as we possess it, represents no mere revision, but is a re-cast by the author of an earlier original from his own hand. On this theory, it becomes easy to explain the affinities between *All's Well that Ends Well* and other plays belonging severally to distinct periods in Shakspere's dramatic productivity. The Countess's admonition to Bertram (act i. sc. 1) may be a reminiscence of Polonius' advice to Laërtes, or *vice versâ*, and the resemblances to passages or features in other Shaksperean comedies may similarly admit of opposite interpretations. (I am not aware that the coincidence has ever been pointed out between one of the passages in this play, which must have proceeded from Shakspere when his gnomic power was at its height, and a singularly impressive Spenserian passage. See the lines, act i. sc. 1:

> 'Impossible be strange attempts to those
> That weigh their pains in sense; and do suppose
> What hath not been can't be.'

Cf. *The Faërie Queene*, Bk. II, opening stanzas, iii.) Parolles, however, is in no case to be regarded as more than the germ of Falstaff, the unctuousness of whose humour could have been so far dried up by no imaginable mental process.

The source of the plot of this play, which must be confessed to be revolting to our notions, is the *Decamerone* (Day iii, Nov. 9), whence the story had been transferred by Paynter into his *Palace of Pleasure* (1566) Nov. 38 of vol. i. (Cf. Delius, *Shakespeare's All's Well that Ends Well, and Paynter's Gilletta of Narbonne*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xxii, 1887. The latter version is reprinted by Mr. Collier in vol. iii of his *Shakespeare's Library*, 2nd edn.) Simrock has pointed out the resemblance and the difference between the story as treated by Boccaccio and the *Sakontala* of Kalidasa, where a ring is equally 'fatal,' but where the reunion of the consorts is differently contrived. Landau supposes Boccaccio to have derived the idea of the ring from the *Hecyra* of Terence. The device adopted by Helena also occurs in a Spanish romantic poem concerning Queen Maria of Aragon.

Boccaccio's story had already served as the basis of an Italian comedy, *Virginia*, by Accolti (1513); and Klein (vol. iv. pp. 557 *seqq.*), who like Simrock points out this fact, discerns 'some meagre features' of Parolles in Ruffo, a character in that play. No English version of the play is known, though of course it might have been brought to England by the Italian actors who were in this country in 1577–8. This slender suspicion need not be held to contradict the general opinion, that the comic characters of *All's Well that Ends Well* are Shakspere's own invention.

(16) HENRY IV. PART I. II c. *Mal.* 14. E. and P. 1598. M.

(17) HENRY IV. PART II. II c. *Mal.* 15. E. and P. 1600. M.?

A booke intitled the Historye of Henry iiijth, with his battaile at Shrewsburye against Henry Hottspurre of the Northe, with the conceipted Mirth of Sir John Falstaffe was entered on the Stationers' Register in February 1598; and under a similar title a quarto edition of *Part I* of *Henry IV* was printed in 1598. Meres in 1598 mentions *Henry IV*—whether referring to *Part I* only, or to both *Parts*, is not obvious; it may be noticed that in the same book (*Palladis Tamia*) Meres quotes from *Part I* (act ii. sc. 4) the phrase 'there is nothing but rogery in villanous man.' (See *Centurie of Prayse*, p. 24.) In 1599 *Part I* was reprinted under that designation, with Shakspere's name. *Part II* was entered on the Stationers' Register in August, 1600, and printed in the same year. That it was written very soon after *Part I* is unmistakeable; as Johnson (cited by Mr. Stokes) observes, 'these two plays are two, only because they are too long for one.' No such certainty attaches to the assumption that *Part II* was produced on the stage immediately after *Part I*, and that the entry on the Register of 1598, as well as Meres' mention of *Henry IV*, refers to both *Parts*. The earliest allusion to *Part II* occurs in Ben Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour* (1599) (which ends with the general allusion 'as fat as Sir John Falstaff'), act v. sc. 2, where one of the characters on the stage is described as 'a kinsman to Justice Silence.' This shows that *Part II* was produced not later than 1599, and probably in the preceding year. (Sir Charles Percy's allusion to 'Justice Silence or Justice Shallow' dates from December, in all probability of 1600, and certainly of no earlier year. His friend Sir Gilly Merrick's blunder as to the play 'of Kyng Harry the iiiith, and of the kyllyng of Kyng Richard the Second,' already noticed (*ante*, p. 104), can least of all have referred to *Part II*. Finally, Dekker's allusion, in the address *ad Lectorem* prefixed to *Satiro-mastix*, dates from 1602.) There remains, however, the curious circumstance, that in one passage of the 1600 quarto of *Part II*, the abbreviation *Old.* for *Oldcastle* was by mistake left standing as the prefix to one of Falstaff's speeches. This has been thought (by myself among others) a conclusive proof of the supposition that *Part II* was written previously to the entry of 1598, in which the fat knight is called Falstaff, more especially in view of the statement in act iii. sc. 2 of the same *Part*, that 'Jack Falstaff, now Sir John' when a boy was page to Thomas Mowbray of Norfolk, which the historical Oldcastle actually was. Perhaps, however, it is sufficient to say, that these slips show *Parts I* and *II* to have been written in close succession, and that the change of name can at the most not long have preceded the writing of *Part II*. At the same time nothing is more certain than that the name of Oldcastle was associated with the character of Falstaff long after the first publication of *Part II*. See the quotation from a tract of 1604 in *Centurie of Prayse*, and the allusion in N. Field's *Amends for Ladies* (1618) to 'the play where the fat knight, hight Oldcastle, told truly what honour was.' Since this refers to the famous soliloquy in *Part I*, act v. sc. 2, it is tolerably plain that the change of appellation was not adopted till after the production of *Part I* on the stage; as is further shown by the pun on the original name of the character in act i. sc. 2 of *Part I*, where Prince Henry calls Falstaff 'my old lad of the castle.'

Mr. Stokes cites an attempt made in the *North British Review* for April, 1870, to assign *Part I* of *Henry IV* to as early a date as 1590, mainly on the ground that the allusions to the affectations of Lyly (*Part I*, act ii. sc. 4) and to the rant of *Tamburlaine* and plays of the same type would have been racier at the earlier date; but the flavour of the fun in the former instance was keen enough to hold out during the longer interval; while Ancient Pistol and his quotations do not make their first appearance until act ii. sc. 4 of *Part II*. No other allusions have been brought definitely home to any particular year, although certain passages in both *Parts* (including the notice of rise in the price of oats, *Part I*, act ii. sc. 1, and of Sultan Amurath's demise, *Part II*, act v. sc. 2) would fit the year 1596.

The general historical authority for the main action of *Henry IV* is Holinshed, whom Shakspere followed even in his mistakes, the two Edmund Mortimers, uncle and nephew, being rolled into one. But Shakspere also made use of the old prose chronicle history of *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth* (cf. *ante*, vol. i. pp. 222–3), which introduces both the youthful desipiences of Prince Hal, and the germ of the powerful scene of his visit to the chamber of his dying father (*Part II*, act iv. sc. 5). This play was certainly acted before 1588.

It was here also that Shakspere found a Sir John Oldcastle in the personage of one of Prince Henry's early associates who forms the chief figure of a robbery-scene, but is not distinguished from the rest of the wild Prince's boon-companions by any special characteristics of his own. Shakspere seems to have been unaware, when he took over the name and personage of Sir John Oldcastle, that this was the 'Lollard martyr,' known more generally under the title of his barony as Lord Cobham. He appears to have been actually an intimate friend of Prince Henry before the accession of the latter to the throne as Henry V, and this may have emboldened him soon after that event to give vent to his Lollard sympathies. The king endeavoured to restrain both Oldcastle and his ecclesiastical opponents, but in vain. After being condemned for heresy in 1413, he escaped from the Tower; and (a Lollard riot having taken place in London early in 1414) he was pursued, and finally—in 1417—seized and burnt to death. The Catholics must have hailed with considerable satisfaction the supposed representation of this historical personage under the character of the old sinner of Shakspere's play; Father Parsons, about 1603, speaks of Oldcastle as 'the ruffian knight, as all England knows, commonly brought in by the commediants on their stage'; and even Dr. Lingard seems to betray a touch of regret in noting that 'it was afterwards thought proper to withdraw him from the drama, and to supply his place with the facetious knight, who still treads the stage under the name of Sir John Falstaff.' (*History of England*, vol. iii. chap. vi, *note.*) A clear account of Oldcastle's career will be found in Mr. Gairdner's admirable essay, cited below; for fuller details see Mr. James Tait's biographical notice in vol. xlii. of *The Dictionary of National Biography*, 1895. By a curious coincidence, Cooling Castle, the property of Oldcastle's third wife, where he shut himself up for a time in 1413, is situate in the vicinity of Gadshill.

It can hardly be doubted that Shakspere changed the name, because he had never entertained any intention of casting ridicule upon the historical personage in question. This is implied by the well-known passage in the Epilogue to *Part II*: 'For Oldcastle died a martyr, and this is not the man.' In the tragedy of *Sir John Oldcastle*, *Part I*, most erroneously ascribed to Shakspere by Schlegel and Tieck (it was entered on the Stationers' Register in 1600, together with a *Part II*, never known to have been published), and certainly later in date than *Henry IV*, the Prologue evidently refers to this unlucky misrepresentation of its hero:

'It is no pampered glutton we present,
Nor aged counsellor to youthful sin,
But one whose virtue shone above the rest,
A valiant martyr, and a virtuous peer,' &c.

This view of the origin of the character of Falstaff seems incontestable, and has been developed by Halliwell-Phillipps in his *Character of Sir John Falstaff, as originally exhibited by Shakespeare*, 1841. There remains however the question: why, on giving up the name of Oldcastle, did Shakspere adopt that of Falstaff, thereby in fact remedying one injustice by another?

Shakspere must have wished to substitute a more appropriate name for Oldcastle's: but unfortunately he was not content with inventing one. In the historical personage of Sir John Fastolf he seems to have thought that he had hit upon a coward whose name could not be taken in vain; but there is every reason for believing that the accusation brought against this knight for want of courage in the French campaigns of the time of Henry VI rested on no solid foundation. The popular view had, however, been already followed in the *First Part* of *Henry VI* (act iii. sc. 2 and act iv. sc. 1); and Shakspere was led to associate the name of Fastolf with the notion of a cowardly knight by the circumstance that Sir John Fastolf, like the Oldcastle for whose name his was substituted, was a Lollard. This curious coincidence (or concurrence) was first pointed out by Mr. Gairdner (see *The Historical Element in Shakspere's Falstaff*, in *Fortnightly Review*, March, 1873). Fastolf, though a brave man, did not live on good terms with his generation; and his will, which contains an allusion to a text (1 *Corinth.* xiv. 38) very much in use among the Lollards, shows him to have had leanings to their doctrines. It is perhaps probably a mere freak of fortune that, as appears from the *Paston Letters*, Sir John Fastolf should have owned a house called the Boar's Head Tavern, situate, however, not in Eastcheap, but in Southwark. Allusions to Falstaff were 'as plentiful as blackberries' in the literature of the generation which was first enriched with his wit. (See the passages cited from Sir Tobie Matthews' *Collection of Letters* and a letter of Lady Southampton's (1604), as well as from later writers, in *Centurie of Prayse*, 40, 47, 114).

On later evidences of the lasting popularity of the character it is needless to enlarge. (Reference has been previously made to Maurice Morgann's admirable *Essay on the Dramatic Character of*

Falstaff, 1777, which developes its general argument from the aesthetic paradox that Falstaff was not a coward.)

The progressive steps in the nomenclature of Falstaff and the other 'irregular humourists' in this incomparable play have been exhibited in tabular form by Mr. Fleay (*Life of Shakespeare*, p. 207; cf. *ib.* 199 as to the theory, that the names of Peto and Bardolph were adopted at the same time as that of Falstaff itself). The character of Ancient Pistol, who first appears in *Part II*, has been compared by Klein (vol. viii. p. 916) to the Centurio in Rojas' *Celestina*, the earliest known specimen on the Spanish stage of one of its favourite types, and (vol. ix. p. 979) to the Soldado in Fernandez's *farsa* of that name. The former was not translated into English till 1631; but Klein thinks that Shakspere might have seen the French or the Italian translation. (Cf. also J. Thümmel, *Der Miles Gloriosus bei Shakespeare*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xii, 1877: Falstaff-Parolles, Armado-Pistol. For an identification of the source of some of the garnishments of Ancient Pistol's speech, see Stokes, p. 60.)

Of the two *Parts* of *Henry IV*, blended into a single play, a very old MS., certainly transcribed before 1644, and probably at an earlier date, was discovered among the papers of the Dering family, and printed for the (old) *Shakespeare Society* by Halliwell-Phillipps, 1843.

Kenrick's *Falstaff's Wedding* (1760, first acted at Drury Lane in 1766; see Geneste, vol. v. p. 95) is the only instance with which I am acquainted—unless indeed Renan's *Caliban* should be cited against me—of an attempt to 'continue' a Shaksperean play, or part of one. The author may be in some measure excused by Shakspere's own example (see below as to *The Merry Wives of Windsor*); but in the Preface he speaks of 'the remarkable ill success of previous imitators of Shakespeare.' His own imitation (which was approved by Garrick, and not disdained by Charles Lamb) shows in addition to an extraordinary familiarity with Shaksperean phraseology, of which much of the dialogue is a mosaic, some original humour in passages of the Falstaffian speeches. Nor is the plot contrived without a certain ingenious audacity; the likeness in unlikeness to the opening of *Henry V* being managed with some amount of inventive power. The diction of Father Paul is, however, rather that of Dr. Johnson than that of Shakspere; and the whole effort of course remains a mere *jeu d'esprit*.

(18) HENRY V. II c. *Mal.* 17. E. and P. 1600.

This play connects itself in every way with the preceding two, and was in all probability composed soon after them. The *Epilogue* to *Part II* of *Henry IV* promises that 'our humble author will continue the story, with Sir John in it, and make you merry with fair Katharine of France.' The sources of the three plays too are virtually the same; *Henry V* is founded on Holinshed; the courtship scene, and probably the notion of the Gadshill robbery, being taken from *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth,* while an occasional touch or hint is derived from one or two other chroniclers and old plays. (See, for a minute examination of the sources of *Henry V,* the Introduction by Mr. W. G. Stone to his revised and corrected reprint of the Folio edition, in *New Shakspere Society's Publications,* 1880.) It is to *The Famous Victories,* unquestionably acted before 1588, although not entered on the Register till 1604, and not to Shakspere's play, where the incident does not occur, that Nashe alludes in his *Pierce Pennilesse* (1592), when speaking of 'Henry V represented on the stage, leading the French king prisoner, and forcing both him and the Dolphin sweare fealtie.' This play, and not Shakspere's *Henry V* (or *Henry IV*), is also that referred to in *Tarlton's Jests* (Old *Shakespeare Society's Publications,* 1844), pp. 24–5, as performed at the Bull at Bishopsgate, and containing a scene 'wherein the judge was to take a box on the eare,' and Tarlton, having obligingly in the absence of the performer of the judge's part doubled it with his own of Derick 'the clowne,' provoked a twofold *furore* by receiving the blow in the former capacity, and retorting in the latter upon a comment on the incident. *The Famous Victories* was probably the play noticed, under the title of *harey the Vth*, by Henslowe as performed on May 14, 1592; another *harey the Vth*, which he mentions as a 'new' play produced on November 28, 1595, cannot have been Shakspere's play, which, being left unmentioned by Meres, cannot be supposed to have been put on the stage before 1598. Probably it was some transitory adaptation of *The Famous Victories.* But that Shakspere's *Henry V,* at all events in its present form, was produced on the stage between the middle of April and the end of September, 1599, seems to result with certainty from the unmistakeable reference in the *Chorus* before act v to the Irish expedition, on which Essex started, amidst general acclamations, on April 15, 1599, and from which he returned, worse than ἄπρακτος, on September 28 of the same year. In this expedition Southampton held the command of General of the Horse. (Halliwell-Phillipps, *Outlines*, vol. i. p. 161.) A direct reference to *Henry V* seems to be implied in Ben Jonson's allusion in the *Prologue* to *Every Man in his Humour* (1598) to the Chorus wafting the audience 'o'er the seas'; but whenever this *Prologue* was written, it was not included in the quarto of 1601, and is not known to have been printed before the folio of 1616. There seems little point in Chalmers' attempts to date the play as early as 1596; Falstaff's dying allusion to 'devils incarnate' (act ii. sc. 3) may, however, refer to Lodge's tract so named, published in that year. On the other hand, the Dauphin's mention of a sonnet written by him in praise of his horse, beginning 'Wonder of Nature,' and Orleans' retort that he remembers a sonnet which began so 'to one's mistress,' seems, as was first pointed out to me by Canon Ainger, to be a playful allusion to Constable's sonnet beginning 'Miracle of the World,' cited by Warton, *History of English Poetry*, vol. iv. p. 431, and I presume dateable before 1594.

The first quarto edition of this play was printed in 1600; and from it were printed the second (1602) and the third (1608). The relations of the quarto to the first folio edition have been much disputed. (They are printed as *Parallel Texts* in the edition prepared for the *New Shakspere Society* by Dr. Brinsley Nicholson, but after he had been compelled to relinquish the work, completed by Mr. P. A. Daniel, who added an Introduction. (*Publications*, 1877.) *The Chronicle History of Henry the fift* (the quarto of 1600) and *The Life of Henry the Fift* (the folio of 1623) had been previously reprinted for the same Society by Dr. B. Nicholson (1875). In 1879 the same writer contributed to the *Transactions* of the Society a critical paper on *The Relation of the Quarto to the Folio version of Henry V.*

The chief differences between the quarto and the folio texts are in the present instance of a peculiar kind. The former is shorter than the latter, and omits all the Choruses, including the Prologue. (Capell ingeniously explained this omission by supposing that Essex's reverses led to the suppression of the complimentary Chorus before act v, that this suppression was followed by that of the other Choruses, and that the first quarto was printed from this mangled piece.) The number of personages appearing on the scene is smaller. (Dr. Brinsley Nicholson conjectures this to be due to the fact that in 1600 the company were travelling in the provinces, perhaps to other motives for reduction.) In the quarto, certain aberrations from historical accuracy to be found in the folio are corrected or avoided, the chief of them being the presence of the Dauphin in two of the Agincourt scenes. (The Dauphin was not present at Agincourt; this mistake was attributed by Mr. Johnes to Monstrelet's mention of a Sir Guichard Dauphin as having been among those who fell in the battle.) But these historical inaccuracies are in the main devoid of much intrinsic significance, and where they possess any such, they may be supposed to have been either ignored or actually introduced with a dramatic purpose. Of greater importance is the fact that, whereas the variations between so much of the texts as is common to folio and quarto are comparatively trifling—although, except in the historical particulars referred to, the quarto appears rarely to vary except for the worse—the passages actually omitted from the quarto, but to be found in the folio, would seem to have been simply 'cut out' for the sake of compression. Indeed, in a particular instance, this process has led to the tagging-on to a night-scene (Quarto, act iii. sc. 7) of the couplet:

'Come, come away!
The sun is high, and we out-weare the day.'

(Folio, act iii. sc. 7).

While, then, a virtual *consensus* obtains, that the quarto was printed not from an authentic MS., but from a copy curtailed for stage representation, or possibly surreptitiously derived from it, Mr. Daniel, in agreement with the view of Malone, rejects the view of Charles Knight, to which Dr. Brinsley Nicholson inclined and which Mr. Fleay favours, that the folio was the result of Shakspere's elaboration of the quarto, or of the 'first sketch' on which the quarto was founded. I cannot but think that Mr. Daniel has proved his hyphothesis, although it might perhaps be safer to rest content with Grant White's conclusion that 'the text of the quarto is so mutilated and incomplete, that it is quite impossible to decide whether the MS. from which it was printed represents even imperfectly an early form of play, or still more imperfectly the completed work as it remains in the folio.'

For some curious enquiries into certain *cruces* in the text of this play (including the variations in the Christian name of Mrs. Pistol, formerly Quickly) see Dr. Nicholson's paper *On Four Passages in Henry V* in *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1880–2, pp. 203 *seqq.*; cf. Mr. Stone's edition, cited *ante*. The Introduction to the latter also contains an account of the interesting stage-history of this play. Lord Orrery's *History of Henry V* (acted 1664, printed 1668), a play in rime, introduces a love-plot entirely foreign to Shakspere's drama, with which it has little or no concern (see below); Aaron Hill describes it as 'a new fabric built on Shakspeare's foundation.' Aaron Hill's own *Henry V, or the Conquest of France by the English* (acted 1723), is more directly founded on Shakspere, but it introduces many alterations, and a new character, that of Harriet the niece of Lord Scroop (le Scrope), whose seduction and desertion by Henry are, so far as I know, unhistorical. *Henry V* was not performed after the Restoration till 1735, and it is not quite certain, though probable, that this was Shakspere's play (Genest, vol. iii. p. 482). That Garrick, in the production of Shakspere's *Henry V* in 1747, should have himself appeared on the stage as the Prologue and Chorus, is a leaf in his laurels as a true votary of the poet. (*Ib.* vol. iv. p. 235.)—I shall return below to Shakspere's treatment of history in this play.

(19) AS YOU LIKE IT. II d. *Mal.* 16. E. 1600.

The entry of this comedy in the Stationers' Register lacks the date of the year, but to the previous entry is attached that of 1600, in which year were printed the other plays entered next after *As You Like It* (viz. *Henry V, Every Man in his Humour*, and *Much Ado about Nothing*), with the same *caveat* 'to be staied' against other printers. Of *As You Like It* no quarto edition is extant. Other indications of the date of the play have been sought in certain passages occurring in it. Rosalind's saying, 'I will weep for nothing, like Diana in the fountain' (act iv. sc. 1), is thought by Malone to allude to the alabaster image of Diana, mentioned by Stowe in his *Survey of London* as set up in Cheapside in 1598, and by the same writer, in the second edition of the same book, as decayed in 1603. At the same time, as Delius points out, Stowe's description of this statue does not precisely correspond to Rosalind's allusion, since in the former water is said to 'prill' from the breast of the figure. In act iii. sc. 5 a line is quoted from Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*—the only instance, as Mr. Fleay observes, in which Shakspere directly refers to a contemporary poet,—which is not known to have been published till 1598. Marlowe, who in this passage is tenderly apostrophised as a 'dead shepherd,' had died in 1593.—The book by which Touchstone professes to regulate his quarrels, and whence he apparently had derived his nice distinctions as to the nature of lies (act v. sc. 4), is conjectured to be *Vincentio Saviolo his Practice* (bk. ii: *Of Honor and honorable Quarrels*), published in 1595. Halliwell-Phillipps has noticed 'books of good manners' (see *ib.*) of earlier dates, viz. *The Boke Intytled Good Maners* (1507), *The Boke of Nurture, or Schoole of Good Maners, &c.* (1577), and *Galateo, or a treatise of the maners and behaviours, &c.* (translated from the Italian, 1576), as well as a fourth of the same date as the last-named.

The allusion to 'Gargantua's mouth' (act iii. sc. 2) need not, as a matter of course, have been derived from Rabelais, since a *Historie of Gargantua* was entered on the Stationers' Register in 1594; but according to Stokes an English translation of Rabelais had appeared as early as 1575. Mr. Fleay thinks the date of the play further determinable by the supposition that it is to be regarded as a rival of the Robin Hood plays brought out at the Rose in 1598—viz., I presume, *The Downfall* and *The Death of Robert Earl of Huntington* (cf. Henslowe's *Diary*, ed. Collier, p. 118).—On the whole, the date of the composition of *As You Like It* may with fair confidence be ascribed to the year 1599 or 1600—'there is on this date,' writes Mr. H. H. Furness in his *New Variorum* edition (1890), 'a happy unanimity, which centres about the close of the year 1599,'—though a few months may 'carry it back into 1598, or carry it forward almost to 1601.' The use of rime in this play is sparing, and more than half of it is in prose. Yet it would be difficult to suppose either *As You Like It*, or any of the delightful group of comedies to which it belongs, to have been written after Shakspere had passed through the experiences and disenchantments of his manhood.

The book from which this incomparable play was taken, is, as has been already noticed (vol. i. pp. 411–12, *ante*), Thomas Lodge's *Rosalynde, Euphues' Golden Legacie, found after his death in his cell at Silexdra. Bequeathed to Philautus' sonnes nursed up with their father in England* (1598). Lodge, there can be no doubt whatever, took many of the leading features of his plot, but not the whole of it, or indeed the characters and incidents which give a pastoral colouring to the whole romance, from *The Tale of Gamelyn*; but the resemblance between the two productions is hardly strong enough to warrant the conclusion that Lodge, who professes to have written his tale at sea, had his mediaeval original actually under his eyes. *The Tale of Gamelyn* was not to be found in any printed copy of *The Canterbury Tales* before

Urry's edition of Chaucer of 1721, where it appeared as *The Coke's Tale*; it had, however, doubtless been at some time seen in this form in MS. by Lodge at Oxford, or at Cambridge, or elsewhere. On the other hand, there is no convincing internal evidence to outweigh the antecedent improbability that *The Tale of Gamelyn* was known to Shakspere himself. That it was so known, was maintained by Dr. Zachary Grey before Shakspere's debt to Lodge had been established. But Charles Knight maintained that Shakspere, although founding his play on Lodge, likewise made direct use of the mediaeval romance. This view was controverted by Delius, *Lodge's Rosalynde und Shakespeare's As You Like It*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. vi, 1871, where an analytical comparison of novel and play is instituted. An additional point or two of direct resemblance between the play and *The Tale of Gamelyn* were noted, without insistence, in Mr. W. G. Stone's useful *Shakspere's As You Like It, and Lodge's Rosalynde Compared*, in *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1882. Prof. Zupitza, in his elaborate essay *Die mittelenglische Vorstufe von Shakespeare's As You Like It*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xxi, which includes an admirable prose version of *The Tale of Gamelyn*, thought it worth his while to go over the whole ground again, arriving, so far as Shakspere's play is concerned, at the result that it cannot be shown to have owed a direct debt to *The Tale*. (The main points at issue are summarised in an Appendix to a recent able edition of *As You Like It*, by Mr. J. C. Smith, in *The Warwick Shakespeare*, 1894; for a fuller statement see the *New Variorum* edition, 1890.) To Shakspere's own invention, so far as is known, are due the character of Jaques, and the comic parts of Touchstone, Audrey and William.

The title of this play was conjectured by Tieck to have been chosen in allusion to the concluding line of Ben Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels*:

> 'By —— 'tis good, and if you like't you may';

but, apart from the fact that this comedy of Ben Jonson was not produced on the stage till 1600, the adoption of the phrase as the title of another play would have been worse than pointless. There is more probability in Simrock's suggestion, that the title was suggested by the polite opening of Lodge's tale: 'If you like it, so; and yes I will be yours in duty, if you will be mine in favour.' (*Comme Il Vous Plaira* is the title of George Sand's French adaptation, of which Jaques is the hero, and which must be supposed to have satisfied the brilliant authoress.)

The scene of this play is laid in the 'Forest of Arden'; Lodge's romance is not similarly localised. The name may have been suggested by that of the Ardennes (the 'famous Ardeyn' of Spenser's *Astrophel*), and may be a reminiscence of that of the Forest of Arden in Warwickshire (celebrated in *Song XIII* of Drayton's *Poly-Olbion*). Mr. Grant White (see his charming tale of *The Forest of Arden* in *Studies in Shakespeare*) believes 'that this enchanted and enchanting forest was not far from the sea-coast of Bohemia; or mayhap that it was that very wood near Athens through which Hermia and Lysander, Helena and Demetrius, pursued each other.'

The idea of the famous passage (act ii. sc. 7), 'All the world's a stage,' is traced by Staunton to the apophthegm of Petronius, 'Totus mundus agit histrionem,' which is said to have been the motto inscribed over the Globe theatre. (The anecdote of the dying Augustus having enquired of his friends, whether he had well acted the play of his life, is in Suetonius, *Augustus*, c. 99.) Staunton adds, that in some Greek verses attributed to Solon, introduced by Philo Judaeus into his *Liber de Mundi opificio*, c. 35, the life of man is divided into ten ages of seven years each, and that similar distributions are made by other authors—Greek, Roman, and Hebrew; while a miscellaneous collection of the fifteenth century called *Arnold's Chronicle* contains a chapter entitled 'The vij ages of man living in the world,' and pictorial illustrations of the same notion were frequent in the Middle Ages, as well as broadsides and ballads on the theme. See particularly the emblem from Boissard's *Theatrum Vitae Humanae* (Metz, 1596), reproduced in H. Green's *Shakespeare and the Emblem Writers*, p. 405, where there is much illustrative learning on the subject; and the representation of the Seven Ages from a block-print in the British Museum, *ib.* p. 407, some figures in which curiously correspond to the 'parts' enumerated by Jaques. Cf. also the short poem *Mundus Theatrum*, by R. C., author of *The Times' Whistle* (*Early English Text Society's* edn., 1871, pp. 126–7). Shakspere recurs to the general idea in several other passages; the comparison of the world to a stage occurs at least twice in the works of Ralegh; see his lines *De Morte* and the Preface to his *History of the World*. Cf. also Chapman's *Revenge of Bussy d'Ambois*, act i. sc. 1; Dekker's *Northward Ho*, act i. sc. 1; Thomas Heywood's *The Author to his Booke*, prefixed to his *Apology for Actors*, and one of the more or less genuine meditations of 'The Lady Elizabeth' recorded in the same author's *England's Elizabeth* (ed. 1637, p. 225), where she describes 'this earthly Globe' as a 'Theatre,' on which 'the Lord hath placed us to get some proofe from hence of our sufficiencie'; Ben Jonson's *New Inn* (act i. sc. 1), together, no doubt, with many other parallel passages. The line, twice repeated in *Locrine*, 'All our life is but a tragedy,' has a different sense. In Wilson's *Andronicus Comnenius* (act v. sc. 4) a song is introduced, beginning—

> 'Some have called life a stage-play; that includes
> Nothing but scenes and interludes.'

Cf. also 'A comparison between the world and the stage,' *Tom Jones*, bk. vii. chap. i. The phrase, 'Life's poor play,' in a passage of the *Essay on Man*, Ep. iii. l. 282, which bears a certain general resemblance to 'the Seven Ages,' conveys a kind of double meaning. Another passage,—

> 'Let the strict lives of graver mortals be
> A long, exact, and serious comedy,'—

is cited as from Pope by Wilkes, *Letters to his Daughter*, 1804, vol. ii. p. 69, who also quotes (*ib.*, p. 63) from Rousseau a passage commencing 'Le monde n'est qu'un œuvre comique.'

The tradition that Shakspere himself acted the part of Adam in this play is said by Capell to have been current in Stratford, and derives a support of a kind from the gossip of Oldys. As to the Elisabethan conception of the part of Rosalind, see Grant White's acute paper *Stage Rosalinds* in his *Studies in Shakspere*; Lady Martin (Miss Helen Faucit), the Rosalind *par excellence* of these latter days, has herself discussed the character in her book *On some of Shakespeare's Female Characters* (1885).

(20) MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING. II d. *Mal.* 18. E. and P. 1600.

This play had been 'sundrie times publikely acted' when it was entered on the Stationers' Register; but there is no evidence that its composition was much anterior to its publication. Mr. Fleay (*Life of Shakespeare*, p. 204) has indeed discovered that the combination of dates, 'Monday, July 6th,' indicated by the mention of the day of the month in act i. sc. 1, and that of the day of the week in act ii. sc. 1, suits the years 1590 and 1601, but no year between the two, and concludes thence that the original version of the play was composed in 1590. But, whether or not a clue of this kind be worth following, the conjecture is not of much value, inasmuch as Mr. Fleay also holds that the play was 'almost re-composed at its reproduction.' The view according to which it was referred to by Meres in 1598 as *Love's Labour's Won* has been already noticed (*ante*, p. 117). The passage in act iii. sc. 1—

> 'like favourites
> Made proud by princes, that advance their pride
> Against that power that bred it,'—

has been generally referred to Essex, and this would suit the probable date of the play; though the late Mr. R. Simpson, in a letter to *The Academy*, Sept. 20, 1875, maintained that it was more probably intended to refer to the Cecils, and that this would better suit both the date and Shakspere's partisan preferences. There is of course no necessity for either conjecture. The plot of the serious part of this tragedy is to be found in one of Bandello's novels (i. 22), which was translated into French in Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques, &c.* (1594). Bandello may have been acquainted with Ariosto's version of the story; but there is no necessity for supposing it to have been used by Shakspere. The *Orlando Furioso*, in bk. v of which it occurs, was translated by Beverly in 1565, and again by Harington in 1591. Spenser reproduced Ariosto's version in *The Faerie Queene* (bk. ii. canto iv. stt. 17 *seqq.*); and according to Harington the same episode had been versified by George Turberville (probably in his *Tragical Tales out of sundrie Italians*, 1587. A novel in Cinthio's *Hecatommithi* turns on a similar intrigue or trick).

Shakspere may possibly have had before him an earlier play on the same subject; for *Ariodante and Geneuora*, which must of course have been based on Ariosto, is mentioned as acted in the presence of Queen Elisabeth in 1582–3. The old German play of *The Beautiful Phoenicia*, by Jacob Ayrer (partly printed by Cohn, *u. s.*, pp. 76 *seqq.*), was founded on Bandello, probably in Belleforest's translation or in one of its German imitations; but it has several points in common with *Much Ado about Nothing* which are wanting in the novel, and which indicate some intermediate source (cf. Cohn, pp. lxxi *seqq.*). The resemblance between Benedick and Beatrice on the one hand, and the clown John and his Anna Maria on the other, is the reverse of striking—indeed the characters are of a very different class; but the introduction of the comic couple, with the discomfiture of the lover, forms a remarkable coincidence between the two plays and certainly points to a common source distinct from Bandello. The circumstance derives additional significance from the fact that the hero of Duke Henry Julius of

Brunswick's comedy, *Vincentius Ladislaus* (printed 1594), 'is in reality what Beatrice wanted to make Benedick appear' (Cohn, p. xlvi), and actually causes his servant to 'set up his bills,' as according to Beatrice's humorous assertion Benedick had done. Since the date of Ayrer's piece is not known—it may have been written before or after 1600—and since that of Shakspere's is similarly uncertain, it is impossible to decide as to their relative priority. That however Ayrer did not copy from Shakspere seems, as Simrock points out, clear from the names of the characters in his play, which follow Bandello, while Shakspere has changed all the names except those of Don Pedro and old Leonato. Professor Herford, in an interesting paper *On Greene's Romances and Shakspere*, contributed to the *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1888, inclines to assign 'as the *soil* in which the brusque and cavalier wit-combats, of which *Much Ado* contains the most conspicuous example among Shakspere's comedies, the Lylian school of Romance, as typified less in Lyly's own works than in those of Greene'; and draws a special parallel between the conflicts between Benedick and Beatrice and the conversations of the young Florentine Benedetto and the noble Donzella Katherine in Greene's *Farewell to Folly* (1591).

H. Brown, who cites Hunter as having held the same opinion, believes the humours of Benedick to allude to William Herbert (Lord Pembroke)'s unwillingness to marry.

Dogberry, with his 'mistaking words,' and the rest of the 'substantial watch' seem to be alluded to in the Induction to Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* (1614). According to Collier, vol. iii. p. 419, Robert Armin, in his tract *The Italian Tailor and his Boy* (1609), refers to Dogberry in a way rendering it probable that he succeeded to the part after Kemp, the original Dogberry (cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 472, *note*), had quitted the Lord Chamberlain's company: 'Pardon, I pray you, the boldness of a beggar, who hath been *writ down an ass* in his time, and pleads *in formá pauperis* in it still, notwithstanding his constableship and office.' (According to Mr. Fleay, Kemp had left the Lord Chamberlain's company by the summer of 1599; which would further fix the date of the play as produced, at the latest, near the beginning of that year.) Cf. for similar satirical treatments of the watch, Lyly's *Endimion* (*ante*, vol. i. p. 293, *note*), Marston's *Dutch Courtesan*, Fletcher's *Love's Cure* (where, however, the satire is of an intensified kind), the same author's *Knight of Malta*, and above all Middleton's *Blurt, Master Constable* and Glapthorne's *Wit in a Constable* (act v. sc. 1).

(21) THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR. II c. *Mal.* 20. P. 1602.

Halliwell-Phillipps and others have held that the composition of this play in its original form may be dated as early as 1592. It is, however, allowed by all these critics, that the original version of the play subsequently underwent revision; and Mr. Fleay asserts his belief that the piece in its original form 'was probably *The Jealous Comedy*, acted as a new play by Shakespeare's company, 5th January, 1593,' and that 'when Shakespeare revived this old play, he accommodated the characters to *Henry IV* as best he could.' The reasons for the assumption of this early date are specious rather than conclusive. Queen Elisabeth is stated to have been entertained by masques and tournaments at Windsor Castle in January, 1593; but these can hardly be brought into connexion with the tradition known to Rowe and Dennis, according to which the play was written for the delectation of Queen Elisabeth, whose fancy had been taken by the fat knight. Of greater significance is the fact that in 1592 Windsor, which with its neighbourhood is the scene of the play, was visited by a real German Duke (cf. act iv. sc. 3 and sc. 5), viz. Duke Frederick of Württemberg and Teck, to the account of whose travels Charles Knight directed attention in association with the allusions in *The Merry Wives*. Certain similarities in the plot to other plays have likewise been held to favour the supposition of a relatively early date for the first sketch of this play. Besides affirming that Duke Henry Julius of Brunswick's drama *Von einer Ehebrecherin* (1594) contains the same story as *The Merry Wives*—a statement which I am unable to verify—Mr. Fleay has noticed the identity of the *Anne Page* story with that of *Wily Beguiled* (dated by him 1597), and the similarity of the name of the play to that of *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* (which he dates in the same year). I have previously referred to certain resemblances between *The Merry Wives* and *Endimion* (*ante*, vol. i. p. 293); but it is no hazardous assumption that a remembrance of Lyly's play, printed in 1591, may have lingered in Shakspere's memory; while allusions to Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, of which (apparently in its later version only) *The Merry Wives* contains reminiscences (act i. sc. 1 and especially act iv. sc. 5), certainly occur in much later plays.

The song, by Marlowe, introduced into act iii. sc. 1 ('To shallow rivers,' &c.) was published as Shakspere's in *The Passionate Pilgrim* in 1599; but this, as Mr. Fleay observes, need by no means have been in consequence of its appearance in the play.

There is no certainty as to the relative dates of composition of *The Merry Wives* and *Henry V*. The promise of the *Epilogue* to *Part II* of *Henry IV* was no doubt, so far as the character of Falstaff is concerned, redeemed by *The Merry Wives* rather than by *Henry V*; but the supposition cannot for a moment be entertained that *The Merry Wives* was in any way contemplated by Shakspere as an organic continuation of *Henry IV*. Halliwell-Phillipps attempted to solve the problem by the conjecture, that 'the two Parts of *Henry IV*, like *The Merry Wives*, originally existed in an unfinished state, and that, when the first sketch of *The Merry Wives* was written, those plays had not been altered and amended in the form in which they have come down to us.' Although this theory would help to explain certain discrepancies in the minor characters, it is out of harmony with what we know of the general conditions of Shakspere's dramatic workmanship. In any case, the difference in the treatment of the character of Falstaff (although I agree with Halliwell-Phillipps that this difference does not affect the essence of the character) is best accounted for by the popular tradition that Queen Elisabeth wished to see the fat knight in love (whether or not he had been already intended to be put out of sight by the narrative of his death in *Henry V*). The tradition is borne out by the fact that the play, as would naturally be the case with one written in haste, is mainly in prose, though in the quarto much of this is printed as verse.

The text of the quarto of 1602 (*A Pleasant Conceited Comedie of Syr John Falstaffe and the merry Wives of Windsor*, &c.), which has been reprinted by the Cambridge Editors and in Halliwell-Phillipps' *First Sketch of The Merry Wives* (*Shakespeare Society's Publications*, 1842), differs in many respects from that of the folio. The play in its later form contains several allusions which appear to have been introduced in the reign of King James, before whom the comedy is stated to have been acted in November, 1604. Mrs. Page's remark (act ii. sc. 1) seems to allude to James's wholesale creation of knights in 1604; and in the folio Falstaff says to Shallow (act i. sc. 1): 'You'll complain of me to the King' (instead of 'to the council,' as in the quarto); but the variation is not convincing. Slender's query to Page (act i. sc. 1): 'How does your fallow greyhound, Sir? I heard say he was outrun on Cotsall,' occurs neither in the quarto of 1602 nor in that of 1619; as Mr. Gosse says (*Seventeenth Century Studies*, 1883, p. 99), in 1623 the Cotswold games, revived by Captain Dover about 1604, 'had the notoriety which follows twenty years of success.' Malone further directed attention to the circumstance that the words 'When the court lay at Windsor' (act ii. sc. 2) may refer to July, 1603, when this exception appears to have been made to the ordinary custom of the court to spend the summer at Greenwich.

The date of the legend of Herne the Hunter is unknown; but Halliwell-Phillipps found a 'Rycharde Herne, yeoman,' among the hunters who were examined and 'confessed' for hunting in the royal forests in the time of Henry VIII.

The source of the plot of *The Merry Wives* is thought to be the story of *The Two Lovers* in Tarlton's *Newes out of Purgatorie*, taken from a novel in Straparola's *Notti piacevoli*. Here are not only identities of incident, but even of expression. Malone also directed attention to *The Fishwife's Tale of Brainford* (Brentford) in *Westward for Smelts* (1620; though Steevens mentions an edition of 1603, apparently erroneously), of which the scene is laid at Windsor. Finally, a similar tale is also noted in Giovanni Fiorentino's *Pecorone*, translated into English under the title of *The Fortunate, the Deceived, and the Unfortunate Lovers* (1632).

Straparola's novel and Tarlton's version are reproduced at length by Halliwell-Phillipps, *u. s.*, and reprinted, with other illustrative material, in vol. iii of Collier's *Shakspeare's Library*. The ballad of *Lady Greensleeves*, the tune of which Mrs. Ford (act ii. sc. 1) contrasts with that of the Hundredth Psalm, appeared in the *Handfull of Pleasant Delites* (1584), and has been reprinted by Fairholt (*Songs and Poems on Costume*, *Percy Soc. Publ.*, vol. xxvii), and by Robert Bell in his *Early Ballads, &c.* (1861).

Falstaff was one of the parts acted with applause, as late as the reign of Charles I, by John Lowin; but there is at least no proof that he was the original performer of the part, and it is hardly likely to have been allotted to so young a man (he was born in 1576). John Dennis, whose version of *The Merry Wives* entitled *The Comical Gallant* appeared in 1702, first mentioned in print the story of Queen Elisabeth's having commanded Shakspere to write this comedy; Rowe, in 1709, added that she wished to see Falstaff in love. Mr. C. E. Turner (*Studies in Russian Literature*, iii, in *Fraser's Magazine* for January, 1877) mentions an adaptation of *The Merry Wives* from the august pen of the Empress Catherine II, entitled *A Pretty Basketful of Linen*, in which 'the personages all bear Russian names, and our old friend Falstaff is transformed into Polendoff (*i. e.* Half-true).' The libretto of Otto

Nicolai's admirable comic opera *Die Lustigen Weiber von Windsor* (1849), if I remember right, follows Shakspere's play pretty closely; and the same appears to be the case with Boito's libretto of Verdi's opera *Falstaff*, produced at Milan in 1893.

(22) JULIUS CAESAR. III a. *Mal.* 28.

Arguing backwards, we may safely assert that this play was not composed later than the first decade of the seventeenth century. *The Maid's Tragedy*, by Beaumont and Fletcher, which was probably licensed in 1611, if not earlier (see below), contains, as was already pointed out by Malone, in the scene between Melantius and Amiator (act iii. sc. 2), an unmistakeable reminiscence of the famous quarrel-scene between Brutus and Cassius. Malone's conjecture that *Julius Caesar* was not produced before 1607, is founded on the fact that in this year there was printed in London a play on the same subject by William Alexander, afterwards Earl of Sterline, which had already been printed in Scotland in 1604, and that this writer would hardly have ventured to essay a theme already so successfully treated by a dramatist of Shakspere's reputation. This conclusion, however, is far from convincing in the instance of a subject so perennially attractive as *Julius Caesar*, more especially if Shakspere's play had appeared several years earlier. Nothing suggests that Shakspere was indebted to Alexander for either the conception or any of the details of his tragedy. That Shakspere's *Julius Caesar*, at all events in its original form, had appeared several years previously to 1607, seems to be incontestably proved. The allusion in John Weever's *Mirror of Martyrs* (1601) to

> 'Brutus' speech that Caesar was ambitious'—

can hardly be mistaken (see *Centurie of Prayse*, p. 42; the allusion in Robert Chester's *Love's Martyr*, 1601, *ib.* p. 144, is too general to bear any special significance). Less force attaches to resemblances that have been pointed out between a passage in *A Warning for Faire Women* (printed 1599) and the passage concerning Caesar's wounds (act iii. sc. 2); and to reminiscences (if they were such) in a passage of Drayton's *Barons' Wars* (not occurring in *Mortimerias*, 1596) of Antony's final tribute to the character of Brutus (act v. sc. 5), and in Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* (1605) of the famous commonplace—

> 'There is a tide in the affairs of men,' &c.,

(act iv. sc. 3). Lastly, Dr. Furnivall's suggestion that the outbreak of Essex's plot in 1601 was present to Shakspere's mind in his conception of the conspiracy against Caesar—and in the sentiment embodied in the *Et tu Brute* apostrophe to its chief personage—is at all events attractive.

The evidence favouring the assumption of as early a date as 1601 for the composition of *Julius Caesar*, rests, however, on broader grounds. In Professor Dowden's words, this play 'should be put back, as the style indicates, and as other evidences concur in proving, near *Hamlet*, and not improbably before *Hamlet* in its latest form.' The resemblances between *Hamlet*, and the indications that the story of Caesar was in Shakspere's thoughts when he wrote the latter tragedy, are singularly striking. (See Mr. A. W. Verity's Pitt Press edition of *Julius Caesar*, 1895, *Introduction*, pp. xi–xii; and cf. Stokes, p. 89, as to the remarkable critical *consensus* on this head.) The metrical tests—more especially the paucity of rimed lines—point to a relatively late date; but they cannot be regarded as telling conclusively against so powerful an argument as that of the obvious distance of time separating this play from *Antony and Cleopatra*. For the latter tragedy, while continuing the historical theme of *Julius Caesar*, differs from it widely, not only in the treatment of the character of Antony, but in almost every essential element of style and workmanship. The ingenuity of Mr. Fleay has suggested the curious theory, that *Julius Caesar* was in its final form compounded out of two plays, *Caesar's Tragedy* and *Caesar's Revenge*. (A play under the former title was actually produced at Court early in 1613, while a second play, of unknown authorship, bearing the title of *The Tragedy of Caesar and Pompey, or Caesar's Revenge*, has come down to us in two editions, one of 1607, the other probably earlier. See Craik, *The English of Shakespeare illustrated in a Philological Commentary on his Julius Caesar*, 4th edn., 1869.) For his illustrations of the theory that the final revision was made not by Shakspere himself, but by Jonson, see *Life of Shakespeare*, pp. 215–6.

It would indeed be strange if the most famous personal and public catastrophe in profane history had not from the first attracted the attention of our dramatists. On February 1, 1562, a fortnight after the production of *Gorboduc*, a *Julyus Sesar* is said to have been brought upon the English stage (cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 207 and *note*); and in 1579 Stephen Gosson mentions *Caesar and Pompey* as one of the subjects treated by contemporary dramatists. A Latin play upon the death of Caesar, by

Dr. Richard Eades, was acted at Christ Church, Oxford, in 1582. *The Tragedy of Caesar and Pompey, or Caesar's Revenge*, already referred to, may have been that mentioned in Henslowe's *Diary* as a new play, *Seser and pompie*, under November 8, 1594. Henslowe likewise states, under May 22, 1602, that Munday, Drayton, Middleton, 'and the rest' were engaged upon, or interested in, the composition of a play called *sesers Falle*. So popular was the subject, that it had by 1609 even found its way into puppet-shows. Chapman's *Caesar and Pompey* (see below), printed in 1631 and apparently never acted, differs altogether from Shakspere's play in both subject and treatment. Alexander's (Sterline's) play more nearly approaches Shakspere's from the former point of view; but it belongs to a different phase of the English drama, being pedantically modelled upon the antique. Caesar's death, *e.g.*, is narrated; this therefore was hardly the play in which Polonius was killed on the Capitol by Brutus. (Possibly his original was killed in Christ Church Hall.)—A *Mort de César* by the French dramatic poet J. Grévin (1540–70) is mentioned by Philarète Chasles.

As already hinted, references and allusions to Julius Caesar and his catastrophe are scattered broadcast through the plays of Shakspere, upon whom the figure and the theme seem to have exercised an irresistible attraction. (See 1 *Henry VI*, act i. sc. 1; 2 *Henry VI*, act iv. sc. 1; *ib.*, act iv. sc. 7; 3 *Henry VI*, act v. sc. 5; *Richard III*, act iii. sc. 1; 2 *Henry IV*, act i. sc. 1; *Henry V*, *Chorus* to act v; *Merchant of Venice*, act i. sc. 1; *As You Like It*, act v. sc. 2; *Hamlet*, act i. sc. 1, act iii. sc. 2, act v. sc. 1; *Measure for Measure*, act iii. sc. 2; *Cymbeline*, act ii. sc. 4, act iii. sc. 1; besides of course several passages in *Antony and Cleopatra*; cf. Craik, *u. s.*, pp. 49 *seqq.*, and Verity, *u. s.*, pp. xiii–xiv). Yet there is no proof that he had studied the subject elsewhere than in North's *Plutarch*, from whose *Lives of Caesar*, *Brutus*, and *Antony*, he has derived his general materials as well as innumerable touches of detail. (See for the chief passages, Verity, pp. 169 *seqq.*; cf. Trench, pp. 52–5; also Professor Skeat's *Shakespeare's Plutarch*, 1875, and F. A. Leo, *Four Chapters of North's Plutarch, &c.*, 1878; see also Delius, *Shakespeare's Julius Caesar und seine Quellen in Plutarch, Jahrbuch*, vol. xvii, 1882.) I see no reason for supposing Shakspere to have supplemented Plutarch by means of a reference to Appian, *de Bellis Civilibus*, vii. 144–6, in the matter of Antony's speech to the citizens; Appian rather describes the speech and its effects than attempts to reproduce it, and there is nothing in him suggestive of the dramatist's inimitable touches—

including the turn given to the opening of the address. What Plutarch failed to furnish was supplied by genius—not by learning. Caesar's deafness on one ear (act i. sc. 2) I cannot trace to any authority. Other instances of licence or negligence in matters of historical detail hardly call for comment. That Caesar was killed on the Capitol, and not in the Theatre of Pompeius, seems to have been a popular tradition, and serves as the handle of a bad joke in *Hamlet.* That the Triumvirs meet in Rome (act iv. sc. 1), and not at Bononia, is a permissible dramatic licence. But passages occur in the tragedy which incidentally show Shakspere's acquaintance with Roman history to have been perfunctory. The very first speech of the play applies a police-law originating in the mediaeval conception of gilds to Roman citizens; Cicero's speaking Greek in the popular assembly (act i. sc. 2) and Caesar's treatment of the Senator Metellus Cimber (act iii. sc. 1) are likewise not in keeping with historical propriety. These trifles are of course as devoid of significance as are the mis-spellings 'Decimus' for 'Decius' and 'Calphurnia' for 'Calpurnia,' taken over from Sir Thomas North. The Italian names of the old copies (Antonio, Florio, Lucio) need not be ascribed to Shakspere.

The tradition which made Porcia a daughter of Cato has, it seems, been impugned (by Mommsen, in *Hermes*, vol. xv. pp. 99 *seqq.*); perhaps it originated in some *praetextata*. (See *Revue Historique*, vol. xiii. n. 1 (1880), p. 143.) The famous *Et tu Brute* of the murder-scene is not in Plutarch; in Suetonius (*Julius*, c. 82) Caesar is said to have exclaimed, when Brutus threw himself upon him: καὶ σύ, τέκνον. But the *Et tu Brute* had become traditional before Shakspere's tragedy, and occurs in Dr. Eedes' Latin play, in *The True Tragedie of Richard Duke of Yorke* (1595), and elsewhere (see Verity, *u. s.*, p. 199).

Although the subject of *Julius Caesar* had been several times attempted by English dramatists before Shakspere made it his own, he has been left in undisputed possession of it by his English successors. The Duke of Buckinghamshire's two plays of *Caesar* and *Brutus* (1772), a feeble execution of a not incorrect idea, have been already mentioned (*ante*, vol. i. p. 515). Cibber's *Caesar in Egypt* (1724) is an adaptation of Beaumont and Fletcher's *False One* (of which Cleopatra is the heroine).

Of Voltaire's *Mort de César* (1735) as well as of his translation of *Julius Caesar* (1760) mention has also been already made (*ante*, vol. i. pp. 536–7). Antonio Conti's Italian tragedy *Giulio Cesare* (1726) is described as a drama in the Italian classical style, though not without reminiscences of Shakspere. He also wrote a *Marco Bruto*. (Conti translated a part of *Paradise Lost*, and some of Pope's poems. Cf. Klein, vi. 2. 192 *seqq.*). A *Mort de César*, by Fréron's brother-in-law, J. C. Royou, was acted at Paris as late as 1825, but failed. Lastly, the eminent French historical and linguistic scholar J. J. Ampère's *César, Scènes Historiques* (1859), is a 'history' in the old sense, rather than a tragedy. It begins with '*Sylla dévine César*' and ends with the *prolétaire's* 'Voyons ce qu'Antoine dira.'

(23) TWELFTH NIGHT; OR, WHAT YOU WILL. II d. *Mal.* 29. A. 1602.

The last of the above *data* rests on the evidence of an entry in the *Diary* of John Manningham, barrister-at-law of the Middle Temple, discovered by Hunter (see his *New Illustrations of Shakespeare*, vol. i. pp. 365 *seqq.*). The *Diary* has since been edited for the Camden Society by the late Mr. John Bruce. In this passage Manningham states that he saw performed at the Middle Temple Candlemas feast (February 2), 1602, 'a play called *Twelve Night*, or *What you Will*. Much like the *Comedy of Errors*, or *Menechmi* in Plautus, but most like and neere to that in Italian called *Inganni*.' And he goes on to describe the 'good practise in it,' of which the unfortunate Malvolio is the victim. Inasmuch as Meres makes no mention of this play, it may be assumed to have been composed between 1598 and 1602. Attempts have been made to fix its date still more precisely. It has been supposed to be referred to in Ben Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour* (1599), act iii. sc. 1; but it is more than doubtful whether the 'comedy,' of which the 'argument' is here described, can be meant to be *Twelfth Night*. Steevens thought that 'the new map with the augmentation of the Indies' mentioned by Maria (act iii. sc. 2) alludes to the map engraved for the English translation of Linschoten's *Voyages*, published in 1598. If the scene in which Malvolio is treated as possessed be actually, as Hunter supposes, intended to ridicule the Puritan practice of exorcism, exposed in 1599 in Harsnett's Tract, *A Discovery of the Fraudulent Practices of John Darrel*, this would advance the date of the play. (See Hunter, *New Illustrations, &c.*, vol. i. pp. 380 *seqq.*; and his attempt, not very convincing, to explain the *crux* of 'the lady of the *Strachy*' (act ii. sc. 5) as derived from the same source.) A passage in act iii. sc. 1 ('Words are very rascals since bonds disgraced them') has been connected with the stringent measures against he stage adopted in 1600 and 1601; again, in act ii. sc. 3, Sir Toby and the Clown cite lines from a song ('Farewell, dear heart') first printed in the *Golden Garland of Princely Delights* (1601; reprinted in Percy's *Reliques*, under the title of *Corydon's Farewell to Phillis*). (Mr. Fleay adds that the appellation 'rudesby' is from Chapman's *Sir Giles Goosecap* (1601); it occurs, however, also in *The Taming of the Shrew*.)

Manningham's observations on the *analoga* of the play are not specially apt. The likeness to the *Menaechmi* is of course only of the most general kind; of the three Italian plays bearing the title cited by Manningham, or a similar designation, the anonymous comedy of *Gli Ingannati* appears to bear the nearest resemblance in story to *Twelfth Night*. (Cf. Miss Toulmin Smith in *Centurie of Prayse*, p. 45. As to this play, see Klein, vol. iv. p. 748.) In it occurs the suggestive name *Malevolti*, and also that of *Fabio*. (See Mr. A. W. Verity's Introduction to his edition of the play, Pitt Press, 1894.) It appears to have been produced some time after 1527, and, having been printed under the title of *Il Sacrifizio* in 1537, was in 1543 translated into French by François Juste under the title of *Les Abusés*. On *Gli Ingannati* Rueda's *Comedia de los Engaños* appears to be directly founded (Klein, vol. ix. p. 158). With the story of this play the novel of Bandello (ii. 36), first published in 1554, and reproduced in Belleforest's French *Histoires Tragiques* (1594), is stated to be in more complete accord than with the novel in Cinthio's *Hecatommithi* (1565), which in its turn was followed more closely than Bandello's in Barnabe Rich's *Historie of Apolonius and Silla* in his *Farewell to Militarie Profession* (1581), reprinted in Collier's *Shakespeare's Library*, vol. i. Mr. Verity appositely remarks that since Rich's tale contained the essential elements of the plot of Shakspere's play, and was written in English, there is no need to seek for foreign sources, which indeed would probably not have been so diligently compared, but for Manningham's observations. Another extant Italian comedy called *Gl' Inganni*, by Nicolo Secco, printed in 1562 (cf. Klein, vol. iv. pp. 792, 801 *seqq.*), seems to have been based upon *Gli Ingannati*. Hunter mentions a third Italian comedy with the same name, in which the disguised lady assumes the name *Cesare* (cf. Cesario in *Twelfth Night*), as written by Curzio Gonzaga, and printed in 1592. According to Klein (vol. iv. p. 806), who compared the second and third of these Italian comedies with *Twelfth Night*, there is no reason for assuming Shakspere's play to have been substantially indebted to either. Montemayor in his *Diana* (1542) has been variously supposed to have taken the main elements of his *Felismena* from Bandello and Cinthio, but his novel was printed before both these collections, though after the play *Gli Ingannati*. (Cf. *ante*, p. 80, as to the sources of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*.) The locality of Illyria occurs however both in Montemayor and in Cinthio, and the latter introduces the incident of the shipwreck.

The conclusion seems to be that while Shakspere may have been acquainted with *Gli Ingannati*, which is even thought to have, in a phrase in the Preface, '*la notte di Beffana*,' suggested the first title of his play, there is nothing to lend probability to the supposition that he had resort for the substance of his plot to any source beyond Rich's version of the story. As to both the title *Twelfth Night* and the second '*What you Will*,' I content myself with citing a passage from the *Letters and Literary Remains* of Edward Fitzgerald (1889), vol. i. p. 316: 'Spedding at last found and sent me his delightful little paper about *Twelfth Night*. I was glad to be set right about Viola; but I think he makes too much of the whole play, "finest of comedies, &c." It seems to me quite a light, slight sketch—for *Twelfth Night —What you Will, &c.* What else does the Name mean?' *What you Will* is also the title of a comedy by Marston (see below).

The comic personages of this piece are in any case Shakspere's own creations, and of native growth. Malvolio, a character, as Charles Lamb has so effectively shown, conceived in Shakspere's most original vein of mingled pathos and humour, has been supposed to have been designed as a satire upon Puritanism. No direct intention of the kind is to be assumed; but the character is at the same time not devoid of Puritan touches, and these gain force from the fact that incidental ridicule is cast upon the Puritans in certain passages both of *Twelfth Night* and of *All's Well that Ends Well*, which cannot be very far removed from one another in date.

Of the references to popular ballads prodigally given by Sir Toby (act ii. sc. 3), 'Peg-a-Ramsey' is stated to be known only as a title; while 'Three merry men are we' is the burden of several old songs, and 'There dwelt a man in Babylon' the beginning of an old ballad *Of the godly and constante wyfe Susanna*, licensed in 1564, on the subject of which there is also a play (Warton, *History of English Poetry*, sec. lii, *note*). The 'very true' sonnet 'Please one, and please all,' quoted by Malvolio (act iii. sc. 4), is printed at length by Staunton, from a recently discovered copy. The burden of the concluding 'jig' of the Clown is the same as that of a snatch of a ballad sung by the Fool in *King Lear* (act iii. sc. 2). It is usual on the stage to introduce as the 'catch' (act ii. sc. 3) a delectable ditty, 'Which is the properest day to drink,' with the origin of which I am unacquainted. 'Mistress Mall,' whose 'picture' is mentioned act i. sc. 3, was a historical character of Shakspere's day, or rather a historical personage without a character, whose name was Mary Frith, and who 'died in 1659, and is stated to have left twenty pounds by her will for the Fleet-street conduit to run with wine when King Charles II returned, which happened soon after.' (Staunton.) Concerning this woman, see below, the note to Middleton and Dekker's *The Roaring Girle, or Moll Cut-Purse,* of which she is the heroine.

(24) TROILUS AND CRESSIDA. III d. *Mal.* 21. E. 1603 and 1609. P. 1609.

The entry of this play by J. Roberts on the Stationers' Register in 1603 is accompanied by the proviso, 'when he hath gotten sufficient authority for it.' Probably no such sanction was ever obtained, inasmuch as *The History of Troylus and Cressula* was entered on the Register January 28, 1609, in which year was printed the quarto edition of *Troilus and Cressida*. It appeared in two issues, of which the earlier in a prefatory *Epistle*, probably intended to court the prejudices of a select (or University) public, flaunted the assertion that the play had never been 'staled with the stage,' or 'clapper-clawed with the palms of the vulgar'; while the second, apparently by way of giving facts their due, declared it to be printed 'as it was acted by the King's Majesties Servants at the Globe.' As has been repeatedly pointed out, while the aforesaid *Epistle* dwelt on the circumstance that the play was 'passing full of the palm comical,' both issues of the quarto describe it as a *History*, under which designation it had been in the same year entered on the Register; while in the Folio of 1623 it is inserted, unpaged, between the *Histories* and the *Tragedies*, being moreover either accidentally or otherwise passed by without mention in the catalogue of contents. No doubt this variety of designation corresponds accurately enough to the ambiguous character of the play as we have it; it is, in point of fact, a tragicomedy in the later rather than in the earlier sense of that term—by no means a burlesque, but a half-satirical, Ariosto-like, treatment of so much of the Homeric and post-Homeric elements of the story as it suited the author's conception and mood to introduce.

So far, however, as the history of the play is concerned, this mixed treatment of its theme has encouraged critics to fall back on the theory, which is favoured by the application of diction and versification tests forbidding the ascription of it as a whole to an early date, that in its extant form it represents the ultimate combination of a twofold, or perhaps even a threefold, succession of versions. Mr. Fleay, who in *Part III* of his essay *On certain Plays of Shakspere of which portions were written at different periods of his life* (in *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1874, pp. 304 *seqq.*) had elaborated this view, has restated with modifications in his *Life of Shakspeare* (pp. 221–2), and in his *English Drama* (vol. ii. pp. 188–190), the results at which it has led him to arrive. They are, in brief, that the extant play had its origin in a much older one, dating from 1593 *c.*, which turned on the 'love-story' of Troilus and Cressida proper. To this he thinks was, under the influence of the earlier books of Chapman's *Iliads* (1598), added the 'camp-story,' and thus was composed the acting version of 1602. (I prefer not to dwell on the attempt, which I cannot but regard as an over-refinement, to separate from the 'Hector-story' the 'Ajax-story,' as superadded in 1607.) In this form Mr. Fleay supposes the play to have had a satirical intention, the character of Thersites being aimed at Dekker, and to have been alluded to in *The Returne from Parnassus*, Part ii. act v. sc. 3, as the 'purge' administered—so to speak *in pari materiâ*—by Shakspere to Ben Jonson, and to the University dramatists into the bargain. Could it but be shown that *Troilus and Cressida* in this shape was, as Mr. Fleay supposes, actually performed at Cambridge about 1601, the conjecture, which in itself must be allowed to be attractive, would be furnished with a more solid basis than it can be averred to possess. Mr. Stokes (pp. 101–104) has added some apt quotations from early Shaksperean plays illustrating the 'love-story' as distinct from the 'camp-story.' It seems impossible to explain the unmistakeable allusion to Shakspere's name in the phrase 'when he shakes his furious Speare,' occurring in act ii of the play of *Histriomastix, or The Player Whipt*, which has been attributed to Marston, and which must have been written during the reign of Queen Elisabeth. In the scene in question a company of players, accompanied by their poet Posthaste, burlesque the parting of Troilus and Cressida, and the speeches of the lovers might seem to allude to Shakspere's play, act iv. sc. 4. Yet apart from the question whether, as Mr. R. Simpson argued (see *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1875–6, pp. 162–3, and cf. *Introduction* to *Histriomastix* in *The School of Shakspere*, vol. ii. pp. 8–9), the character of Posthaste be intended for Shakspere, it can hardly be possible that his *Troilus and Cressida*, in however early a version, is the play there burlesqued; and Mr. Fleay's conjecture (*English Drama*, vol. ii. p. 72) seems far more probable, that the play satirised was that on which Henslowe in his *Diary*, under April 7, 1599, notes Dekker and Chettle to have been engaged, and of which he spells the title as *Troyeles and Creasse*. Henslowe subsequently refers to it under the same designation, and, possibly, under May 26 of the same year, mentions it again as *The Tragedie of Agamemnon*.—If, as seems to me inevitable, the conclusion must be that *Troilus and Cressida* represents a composition of at least dual origin, any discussion as to its satirical intention, or otherwise, loses much of its interest as applying to the play in its present form. (For a very effective argument maintaining the essentially satirical design of the play in its existing form, and temperately refuting the opposite view of Hertzberg, prefixed to his translation of it, see Ulrici, *Ist Troilus und Cressida Comedy, oder Tragedy, oder History*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. ix. 1874.)

The sources which Shakspere *might* have used for *Troilus and Cressida* are of course very numerous; but as is well said by Eitner (*Die Troilus-Fabel*, &c., in *Jahrbuch*, vol. iii. 1868), 'if he wanted anything, he looked round for it. Why should Shakespeare have needed to know Old-French, or Italian, or Latin, in order to write *Troilus and Cressida*? He found the story in the old popular books of his own country; Lydgate stood him in stead for the Latin of Guido della Colonna, Chaucer for the Italian of Boccaccio, and Caxton for the French of Raoul le Fèvre.' Skelton, in *The Booke of Phyllyp Sparowe* (before 1509), refers to the Chaucerian story, to the 'blemish' upon the name of Cressid, and to the immortal infamy of 'Pandara.' *The Storry of Troylous and Pandar* was the subject of a 'komedy' presented before Henry VIII among the Christmas entertainments at Eltham in 1515; but though a detailed record exists of some of the costumes worn by the performers, we do not know whether this 'komedy' was anything more than a pageant. In *Tottel's Miscellany* (1557) is to be found *A Comparison*, by an unknown author, *of his loue with the faithfull and painful loue of Troylus to Creside*, in which they are extolled as a model pair of lovers, no mention being made of Cressid's perfidy. But in Greene's *Euphues, his Censure to Philautus* (1587) we find 'essentially a picture of the scenery of Troy from the familiar, sarcastic standpoint of Euphues,' which, slight though it is, resembles the manner of Shakspere's treatment far more closely than is the case with any remoter sources, and which, in the description of Cressida, suggests some of the most salient traits in Shakspere's 'pert, impudent, ingenious heroine.' (See Prof. Herford, *On Greene's Romances and Shakspere*, in *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1887–90, pp. 186–190.) Peele's *Tale of Troy* (1589 and 1604) challenges a study of the story of Troilus and 'the ranging Cressida' in 'fair England's Chaucer.' It was unmistakeably his English predecessors who directed Shakspere's attention to his theme, with the probable addition of Chapman, in whose early *Iliads* he might have found (though he might also have found them elsewhere) at least the outlines of the character of Thersites. (As to the old interlude *Thersytes*, cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 248.) Cf. Klein, vol. iv. p. 590, where there are some remarks worth notice on the subject of the species to which *Troilus and Cressida* belongs, and Eitner, *u. s.*, pp. 294 *seqq.* Hertzberg thought that Shakspere might have derived the Homeric features in his Thersites from various other authors accessible to him—whether from the Pindarus Thebanus, or from Ovid, Juvenal, and Seneca, *de Ira*. But in truth the Shaksperean Thersites is Aristophanic rather than Homeric, with a superadded Aeschinean malignity. It should be borne in mind as a cardinal fact in regard to Shakspere's treatment of his theme, that in the words of Hertzberg (*Die Quellen der Troilus-Sage in ihrem Verhältniss zu Shakespeare's Troilus und Cressida*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. vi, 1871), 'of the whole action of Shakespeare's play not a single feature recurs in Homer; nothing has remained but the greater proportion of the names, the scene, and the hypothesis of the action, viz. the war of the Greeks against Troy under Agamemnon's leadership for the recovery of the ravished Helen; but even of that rape the motives are un-Homeric.' (See Troilus' speech, act ii. sc. 2.) Had Shakspere read Homer, it may be added, he would hardly have made the Greeks assemble at Athens before sailing for Troy; still less likely is it that in Hector's parting-scene he would have allowed 'the one best of omens' to escape his notice.

The history of the literary treatments of the tale of Troy from Homer to Shakspere has been traced with masterly clearness by H. Düntzer, *Die Sage vom trojanischen Kriege* (1869); Hertzberg, himself a master of Chaucerian literature, has, in the essay referred to above, more especially pursued the relations between the Troilus-myth in particular and Shakspere's play. It must suffice to state here that Greek literature is full of the Trojan war both in its epic and in its dramatic branches, from the Homeric poems down to the *Iliaca* of the Byzantine Tzetzes in the twelfth century of the Christian era. Roman polite literature, so far as we know, began with a translation of the *Odyssey*, and through its classical period and Vergil, down to the days of its decay, when bad novels had superseded sustained versified efforts, showed a consistent predilection for a subject irresistible to Roman readers, if on no other account because of its supposed connexion with the ancestry of their race. Trojan themes largely preponderated in Roman tragedy of the Republican period, but no partiality is demonstrable in its treatment of Greek and of Trojan personages respectively. (See O. Ribbeck, *Die römische Tragödie im Zeitalter der Republik*, Leipzig, 1875, p. 632.) In the Middle Ages, no other cycle, not even that of Alexander the Great, so powerfully attracted the favour of writers and readers as this. Not only do we meet with treatments of the subject of the Trojan war in the mediaeval literature of almost every European nation from Italy to Iceland, but following the example of the Romans, many nations, the Franks (who had a legend attributing their origin to a migration up the Danube under two princes, Priam and Antenor), the Northmen, the Britons, the very Turks, credited themselves, or were credited by others, with a Trojan ancestry.

The chief source to which the writers of the Middle Ages turned for the history of the Trojan War was a Latin narrative purporting to be translated by Cornelius Nepos from the Greek of the so-called Dares Phrygius, whose existence is more than problematical, and whose name was probably invented to suit *Iliad* v. 9. This book, which pretended to have been written by a Trojan eye-witness of the war, was in reality a novel of the days of the decadence of Roman literature, and probably composed somewhere about the sixth century of the Christian era. I cannot here enter into the merits of the elaborate argument of Körting, as to the existence of a longer Dares, afterwards epitomised. The peculiar characteristic of Dares is that he places himself steadily on the side of the Trojans, and while representing everything in a light favourable to them and unfavourable to the Greeks, appears to suggest, as Chaucer puts it (*Hous of Fame*, bk. iii), that 'Omere made lyes.' Troilus, who in Homer is only mentioned in passing, here becomes a hero of the first rank. The emotion which Achilles displays at the sight of the dying Troilus caused this scene to be treated by painters. A tragedy, *Troïlus*, was written by Sophocles, as well as what was probably a parodistic comedy, *Troïlus*, by Strattis. The conception of the Sophoclean tragedy appears to have been derived from the *Cypria*; Troilus appears as an ἀνδρόπαις, a youth valiant beyond his years. This may have been one of the Sophoclean tragedies translated by Q. Cicero. (See Ribbeck, *u.s.*, p. 619.) The motive said to have been used by Lycophron, of Achilles becoming enamoured of the dead boy, may possibly have already appeared in Sophocles. Cf. Welcker, *Die griechischen Tragödien*, &c., vol. i. pp. 126–9; cf. *ib.* p. 20.

There was another Latin account of the Trojan war, also professing to be a translation from the Greek—a so-called journal or *Ephemeris* of the Trojan war by the Cretan Dictys, who laid claim to having been a companion of Idomeneus. This book, which in its Latin (and possibly original) form probably dates from the second century of the Christian era, was fuller than Dares,—but as not written from the 'Trojan standpoint' was more sparingly used by mediaeval writers. Similarly, a certain Sisyphus professed to have been a companion of Teucer; and his account was at least quoted in the sixth century. And a certain Corinnus was appealed to even in the fourteenth. (Cf. Teuffel, *History of Roman Literature* (E. Tr.), vol. ii. pp. 392–3.)

Lastly, the 'Homer' to whom a few of the mediaeval writers appeal must be supposed to have been the Greek Homer. This production was a Latin epitome of the *Iliad* numbering about 1,100 lines, published under the name of Pindarus Thebanus, and ascribed to the first century of our era.

In addition to these sources, the poems of Vergil, Ovid (*Metamorphoses* and *Heroides*), and Statius (*Achilleis*) were of course open to mediaeval writers.

The most ancient poems on the story of Troy belonging to the Middle Ages were composed in Latin by French ecclesiastics. In the thirteenth century an English monk, Josephus Iscanus, produced a poem, *De Bello Trojano*, using the above authorities; and in the same century a German ecclesiastic, Albert of Stade, composed a poem called *Troïlus*, but dealing with the general subject of the siege, and not with this particular hero. Like the Norse *Trojumanna Saga*, which adapts the heroes of antiquity to the nomenclature of Scandinavian mythology, and appeals to the 'Scald Homerus' as an authority, Albert of Stade principally follows Dares.

With the second period of mediaeval poetry on this subject begins the tendency to transform the Trojan heroes into mediaeval knights seeking honour in the service of their ladies, and the gods into magicians adored by men for their superhuman powers. In short, everything is metamorphosed by the spirit of the Middle Ages; and where the poets describe any ancient custom abhorrent from the manners of their own times, they are careful to assure their hearers that they are telling the truth.

The earliest of these romantic singers of the Trojan war is Benoît de Sainte-More, the author of the *Destruction de Troyes* (commonly called the *Roman de Troyes*), a long poem dating from about the middle of the twelfth century. Where Benoît thought his authority Dares dull or insufficient, he supplemented him not only from Ovid and other such sources, but by ornament and even by invention due to his own knightly and courtly fancy. This was particularly the case with the episode of *Briseïda and Troilus*, of which Benoît's was so far as is known the first literary reproduction. Whether he can be called its inventor, remains very doubtful. (See Frommann, *Herbert von Fritzlar und Benoît de S^te^ Maure,* in *Germania,* vol. ii. p. 53.) In Dares Calchas had become a Trojan priest who deserts Troy for the Greek camp, leaving his daughter Briseïda behind him. Quite in the spirit of mediaeval romance, Benoît causes her to engage in an amour with Troilus, one of the sons of Priam. Calchas having, during the interval of a truce, demanded the extradition of his daughter, she is, to her deep grief, obliged to quit her lover; but both vow eternal fidelity at parting. In the Greek camp, however, Briseïda soon forgets her vow, and Diomed succeeds in effacing the image of Troilus from her heart.

Here then we have the origin of the immortal story of Troilus and Cressid, which was to become the poetical type of a lover's perjury; but for which Benoît had no authority beyond that of his own imagination. His poem became the chief source of the Trojan romances of German literature,—above all of the *Trojan War* of Conrad of Würzburg, who wrote towards the close of the thirteenth century; Spanish as well as Italian versions direct from Benoît, besides others using later versions of him, have been noted by a recent contributor to the literature of this inexhaustible subject (A. Mustafia, in two pamphlets published at Vienna); and a Middle-Dutch version, identified as by Mærlant, has been even more recently discovered (see *The Academy,* March 1, 1872). But the most noteworthy version of Benoît was a Latin prose novel by Guido della Colonna, of Messina, the *Historia Destructionis Trojae,* completed in 1287; of which, with the occasional use of earlier sources, translations are stated to have been made into Italian, French, Spanish, English, High and Low German, Dutch, Bohemian, and Danish. The English *Siege or Batayle of Troye*, a poem probably composed about the beginning of the fourteenth century, according to its editor, Dr. A. Zietsch, Göttingen, 1874, has Dares for its direct source.

From Guido Boccaccio took the subject of his *Filostrato*, 1348; and on the *Filostrato* Chaucer based his poem, although working with much originality of arrangement as well as detail, and also using Benoît directly, as well as other authors for details. The Lollius to whom he here appealed as an authority on the Trojan war, and whom in *The House of Fame* he coupled with Dares and Guido, was doubtless an inexcusable, though ingenious misinterpretation of a well-known Horatian line (*Epist.* i. 2. 1); while the *Trophe* which Lydgate (Prologue to *The Falls of Princes*) states Chaucer to have translated was, as D. G. Rossetti maintained, no other book than the *Filostrato* itself; for both terms signify 'the victim of love.' (See, however, as to the opinion on this subject of the late Henry Bradshaw, the *Memoir* of him by Professor Prothero (1888), p. 216.) Boccaccio introduced the personage of Pandarus (the name is Homeric), but as a sympathising youthful kinsman and friend of Troilus. Chaucer seems responsible for the 'proverbial' (in more senses than one) character of Pandarus (cf. E. K.'s Epistle prefatory to the *Shepheard's Kalender*), but hardly to the full extent of its developement.

Lydgate's *Troy-Booke*, on the other hand (before 1460), was a version taken directly from Guido della Colonna. Neither Chaucer, nor of course Lydgate, were however the first who attempted to reproduce the story of Troy, or part of it, in English verse. This distinction appears to belong to an anonymous writer of the fourteenth century, whose *Gest Historiale of the Destruction of Troy* (printed for the *Early English Text Society*, 1869) first introduced the tale of Troilus to English readers. Finally the French *Recueil des Histoires de Troyes* by Raoul le Fèvre (1463 or 1464), which in three books gives an account of the three destructions of Troy, either follows or epitomises Guido; and the *Recuyell of the historyes of Troye, translated and drawen out of frenshe into englishe by W. Caxton* (1471), appears to be nothing more than a faithful translation of its French original.

It was from Caxton and Lydgate, or from both, that Shakspere derived the more general elements of his play, the characters and mutual relations of the several heroes, and the events of the siege. In the main action, however, the love-story of Troilus and Cressida, he has exclusively followed Chaucer. It is needless to identify the origin of the exquisite passage on Helen (act ii. sc. 2); or to cite in return passages in this play showing a depth of tenderness wholly Shaksperean.

Mr. Fleay considers that 'the authorship of the *Troylus* Prologue is very doubtful.' (It is wanting in the quartos.) Th. Bruns (*Der Epilog zu Troilus und Cressida*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xii, 1877) seeks to relieve him of the less pleasing responsibility of the Epilogue, while at the same time attempting to reduce its offensiveness.

The eminent editors of Bacon (Ellis and Spedding, i. 739; cf. iii. 440) have pointed out that a passage in this play (act ii. sc. 2, Hector's quotation, which involves a misapplication, from Aristotle) was suggested by Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*, bk. ii, where the same misapplication is made. (Aristotle speaks of political, not of moral philosophy. The editors of Bacon show that the Italian Virgilio Malvezzio, in his *Discorsi sopra Cornelio Tacito*, made the same mistake.)

Dryden's version of this play under the title *Truth found too late* (1678) has been already noticed (*ante*, vol. i. p. 513).

Although the story of Troy has continued to furnish poetic literature—and especially that of the drama—with themes, as well as with the material for numberless allusions, I am not aware that any other hand has followed Shakspere's in reproducing the episode, mediaeval rather than antique in its essence, of *Troilus and Cressida*.

(25) MEASURE FOR MEASURE. III a. *Mal.* 22. A. 1604.

This play, which was not entered on the Stationers' Register, nor is known to have been printed before the First Folio, was acted at Whitehall on the evening of December 26, 1604. (See the quotations from the old notes of the *Audit Records* taken for Malone 1800 *c.*, and from the MS. *Accounts of the Treasurer of the Chamber*, *ap.* Halliwell-Phillipps, *Outlines*, vol. ii. pp. 262–3.) Tyrwhitt and Malone have conjectured two passages in it (act i. sc. 1, and act ii. sc. 4) to contain 'a courtly apology for King James I's stately (?) and ungracious demeanour on his entry into England.' The conjecture seems acceptable, more especially as in the sentiment of the former of these passages there is something not ill according with the aversion to unnecessary publicity, which we may fairly suppose to have formed an element in the poet's own character.

Malone (*Life of Shakespeare*, vol. ii. pp. 384 *seqq.*) has pointed out that the mention in a passage of act i. sc. 2 of 'the war' seems to show that the play was written before the conclusion of peace with Spain (August, 1604), while 'the sweat' in the same passage may refer to the pestilence of 1603; at all events *Measure for Measure* was probably composed at no great distance of time from these occurrences. Malone also notes that of the ten prisoners, whose names in act iv. sc. 3 Pompey (the clown) enumerates, four are stabbers or duellists—a class of offenders against whom was passed the 'Statute of Stabbing,' as it was commonly called, of the first year of the new reign.

The metrical tests, which place *Measure for Measure* in the near vicinity of *Hamlet*, and the unmistakeable depth of tone which as it were carries us on towards Shakspere's greatest tragic works, altogether accord with the assumption that this play was written in 1603 or 1604.

The plot of this comedy—in which the comic interest is altogether overpowered by the serious—is taken from the prose narrative of *The rare Historie of Promos and Cassandra*, inserted by George Whetstone in his *Heptameron of Civil Discourses* (1582; reprinted in vol. iii of Collier's *Shakespeare's Library*); and, doubtless, Shakspere had also read the play by the same author, which appeared at a rather earlier date. (See above, vol. i. pp. 216–7, as to the wide distinction in character noticeable between Whetstone's and Shakspere's plays, although they resemble one another so closely in their framework.) No essential difference is to be noted between Whetstone's play and his novel; but in the latter the heroine bears the name of Isabella, which circumstance would of itself suggest that it was to the novel Shakspere was most directly indebted. Whetstone had taken the story of both his play and his novel from the *Hecatommithi* of Giraldi Cinthio (ii. 3, 5, 1565), who himself dramatised it in a play called *Epitia*, described by Klein (vol. v. p. 353) as not having so much as a phrase in common with Shakspere's play, which comes near to it in the main features of the plot. Whether Shakspere had any direct acquaintance with Cinthio's novel is uncertain, inasmuch as wherever Whetstone diverges from his original he is followed by Shakspere. (Cf. K. Foth, *Shakespeare's Mass für Mass* *und die Geschichte von Promos und Cassandra*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. viii, 1878.) Cinthio probably founded his story on some historical anecdote; several such are mentioned by Douce and Dunlop, one of them connecting itself with Charles the Bold, another with Lewis XI and his notorious favourite Olivier le Dain. Simrock has adduced other anecdotes of the same kind from Italian and Hungarian romance (King Matthias Corvinus, it will be noted, is the Haroun-Alrashid of Whetstone's play), together with the story of a judgment delivered in Lombardy by the Emperor Otto I (Grimm's *Deutsche Sagen*, ii. 169), on which he thinks Cinthio's novel was perhaps founded. Foth also mentions a (non-extant) French tragedy of the sixteenth century, entitled *Philamire*, printed 1563—i. e. two years before the publication of Cinthio's novel—which treated the same theme, with the difference that the victim was in this instance the wife, not the sister, of the condemned. In one form or another the main incident of the plot unhappily cannot but have repeated itself in history; the notorious Kirke was accused of an atrocity similar to Angelo's. (See Macaulay's *History of England*, chapter v, where Kirke is said, as he was not the first, so not to have been the last 'to whom this excess of cruelty was imputed.')

As Whetstone diverged from Cinthio above all in one important point—the original of Andrugio (Shakspere's Claudio) is actually put to death by his sister's ravisher, while in Whetstone his life is saved by a compassionate gaoler—so Shakspere introduced changes into the plot as he took it over from Whetstone. The chief of these is the substitution of Mariana, Angelo's former love, for Isabella, whereby, without any real mitigation of Angelo's moral guilt, the honour of the heroine is preserved, and a more or less satisfactory solution of the plot is facilitated. It cannot be said that the device, though it serves these purposes, is anything but revolting; the comic counterpart of it may be found in the old tale of *Dame Siris* (cf. ten Brinck, *u. s.*, vol. i. p. 319). In Whetstone Shakspere found (with a different name, of course) Mistress Overdone and a large proportion of the crew of gaol-birds and their caretakers who diversify the action of the play, but whose share in it is in *Measure for Measure* managed with a great accession of skill and effectiveness. (Cf. Foth, *u. s.*, pp. 181–2.)

Whetstone's play abounds in songs, introduced, in the main, rather to please the audience than to add flow or force to the action. Hardly more than a trace of this has passed over into *Measure for Measure*. (See the Duke's chorus-like lines at the close of act iii.)

The beautiful song ('Take, O, take those lips away') with which act iv commences, recurs in *The Bloody Brother*, written by Fletcher and William Rowley (?) in or after 1624, with slight variations and the addition of a second stanza. The actual authorship of the song is doubtful; but both stanzas are ascribed to Shakspere in an edition of his *Poems* printed in 1640. This is thought to be the solitary instance where a doubt can be raised as to Shakspere's authorship of a song (other than a mere scrap or 'foot' of a popular ballad, or an obvious quotation) introduced by him into any of his plays. (See R. Bell's *Songs from the Dramatists*, p. 95 *note*, with a reference to Collier, *Shakespeare Society's Papers*, vol. ii. p. 33; and cf. Dyce's *Works* of Beaumont and Fletcher, vol. x. p. 459.)

Malone, *u. s.*, p. 387, has pointed out an interesting parallelism between the passage in *Measure for Measure* (act ii. sc. 4), commencing

> 'So play the foolish throngs with one that swoons,'

and a stanza in *Mirrha, the Mother of Adonis* (1607, by William Barkstead, who, in the same poem, paid a warm tribute of admiration to Shakspere (see *Centurie of Prayse*, p. 76). Mr. Stokes adds the conjecture that Barkstead, who at the time was one of the Children of the Revels, may very possibly have taken a woman's part—conceivably that of *Isabella* herself—in the performance of the play at Court.

The title of *Measure for Measure* was a proverbial phrase, and is so used in the last scene of *Part III* of *Henry VI*,

> 'Measure for measure must be answerèd,'

as well as in *A Warning for Faire Women* (1599).

Measure for Measure, though never a favourite acting play, was periodically reproduced on the stage till the days of Macready. Of late it has been rarely seen. The part of Isabella was, however, on the repertory of a gifted actress, the late Miss Julia Neilson; and the play was performed by the Shakespeare Reading Society at the Royalty Theatre on November 9, 1893, in Elisabethan costume, and on a stage arranged according to the Elisabethan model.

(26) HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK. III a. *Mal.* 19. [E. 1602.] P. [1603;] 1604.

It would be futile—and in a degree of which ancient and modern literature present very few similar instances—to attempt a brief summary of the main conclusions arrived at in the mass of exegetical and critical literature which has accumulated round this single play. Even Mr. H. Howard Furness' *New Variorum* edition of *Hamlet* (2 vols., 1877) is described by the editor, whose assiduity is only equalled by his learning, as an 'impossible attempt to condense within a certain number of pages a whole literature'; and I find the late Professor Karl Elze's *Shakespeare's Tragedy of Hamlet* (Halle, 1882) described by a reviewer, who takes numerous exceptions to its text, as 'not a new impression of Elze's previous most honourably known edition of the play, but a kind of *supplement* to Furness' excellent *Variorum Hamlet*.'

The Revenge of Hamlett Prince of Denmarke, as yt was latelie Acted by the Lord Chamberleyne his servantes was entered on the Stationers' Register in 1602. On the accession of James I in the following year the Lord Chamberlain's servants became the King's; and the quarto *Tragicall Historie of Hamlet, By William Shakespeare: as it hath beene diuerse Times acted by his Highnesse seruants in the Cittie of London: as also in the two Vniuersities of Cambridge and Oxford, and elsewhere* (1603), which is not known to exist in more than two copies, may be confidently assumed to be the play thus entered. (This 'First Quarto' is reprinted in vol. ii of Mr. Furness' *New Variorum*.) In the following year (1604) was published the 'Second Quarto,' under the same general designation as the 'First,' and again with Shakspere's name, but without any reference to performances of the play. The Third Quarto (1605) is merely a reprint of the Second, differing only in some trifling variations of spelling. In 1607 the publisher, John Smethwicke, entered on the Register, among other works assigned to him by Nicholas Ling (by or for whom the previous quartos had been printed), *a booke called Hamlett*; and by him were printed the Fourth Quarto (1611) and the Fifth, of which the date is uncertain. No further quartos are known to have appeared before the First Folio.

It is as to the nature of the First Quarto that a controversy of great importance has been carried on by a succession of critics. The personage called Polonius in the Second Quarto and afterwards here bears the name of Corambis, and his servant Reynaldo is called Montano. Furthermore, however, the statement on the title-page of the Second Quarto, that this edition of the play is 'enlarged to almost as much again as it was,' is borne out by the reckoning that it numbers 3719 lines as against the 2143 of the First Quarto; there are, moreover, between the two impressions notable differences in words, phrases and even in the order of scenes.

No doubt can be entertained as to the fact that the additions, elaborations, and changes in the Second Quarto stamp it as the work of a maturer thinker and a more perfect poet. The question is simply, whether the First Quarto was a first sketch of the Second by the same master-hand—for the supposition that it was merely the same text mutilated with a view to the stage, and imperfectly taken down from its performance there, will most assuredly not meet the exigencies of the case—or whether it was a play in which indeed Shakspere had a hand, so far as its acted and printed presentment was concerned, but which was in the main features of its conception and treatment derived from an earlier work by another writer or writers.

The view according to which the First Quarto was to all intents and purposes an earlier Shaksperean work was maintained with much force of argument by Charles Knight, with whom Staunton and Dyce, as well as Gervinus, Delius and Elze, are substantially in agreement. On the other side, Tycho Mommsen argued very elaborately to the effect that the differences between the First and the Second Quarto are not of a nature to allow us to account for them by the supposition of a revision by Shakspere of a work essentially his; and the Cambridge editors, modifying their previous view, arrived at the conclusion stated as follows in their *Clarendon Press* edition of *Hamlet* (1872): 'There was an old play on the story of Hamlet, some portions of which are still preserved in the quarto of 1603; about the year 1602 Shakespeare took this and began to remodel it for the stage, as he had done with other plays; the quarto of 1603 represents the play after it had been retouched by him to a certain extent, but before his alterations were complete; and in the quarto of 1604 we have for the first time the *Hamlet* of Shakespeare.' Mr. Fleay (*Life of Shakespeare*, pp. 333–4) seems to have arrived at no very different conclusion, when he asserts that 'we have, in the forms of this play, an example of Shakespeare's hurried revision of the work of an earlier writer, but it must be remembered in a most mutilated form; of the full working out of his own conception, in the shape fittest for private reading; and finally, of his practical adaptation of it to the requirements of the stage.' That the Folio text, however, was not a mere abridgement of that of the Second Quarto, is clear from the fact, noticed by the Cambridge editors, that in it appear not only many passages which do not appear in any of the Quartos, but several which appear in the First Quarto, but not in the Second or in any of its successors.

The ultimate conclusion of Messrs. Clark and Wright seems to me on the whole most deserving of acceptance, in view of the nature of the imperfections of the First Quarto. The mere change of names in two personages of the play seems of comparatively little importance; nor do I perceive any necessity for resorting to so infelicitous a conjecture as that of Tycho Mommsen, according to which the names of *Corambis* and *Montana* may have been 'pieced out from *Cor.* and *Mon.*, which might mean *Courtier* and *Man* (*i.e.* servant, of Polonius). The name *Corambus* occurs in the German play, noticed below. Of those 'links' which are plainly discoverable between *Julius Caesar* and *Hamlet*, and which are enumerated by Dr. Furnivall (*Introduction* to *Leopold Shakspere*, p. lxix), some at least are to be found in the text of the First as well as in that of the Second Quarto; and other passages in the former indicate that the play was first put together by Shakspere in 1601—possibly, as Mr. Fleay thinks, 'hurriedly during the journey' of Shakspere's company 'to Scotland, in which the company visited the universities, at a time when the public taste for revenge-plays had been revived by the reproduction of Kyd's *Jeronymo*' and other plays with the same motive, including Shakspere's own *Julius Caesar*. The allusion to the players being obliged to travel is here followed by a reference to the superseding of public by private plays, and by the performances of children, which suits the year 1601, when both the Chapel boys at Blackfriars and the Children of St. Paul's were performing—the latter, at all events, with much applause. (See *Jack Drum's Entertainment*, 1601; and cf. Fleay, *History of the Stage*, p. 161, and *Life of Shakespeare*, p. 228.) The passage attributing the travelling of the actors to an 'inhibition' due to a late 'innovation' first occurs in the Second Quarto; and it must in candour be allowed that the meaning of neither term has hitherto been satisfactorily explained. Mr. Fleay is, however, in my opinion, clearly right in rejecting the usual explanation of the term 'innovation' as referring to the licence given on January 30, 1604, to the newly-named Children of the Queen's Revels to play at the Blackfriars Theatre. This was really nothing more than a change of designation analogous to that made in the case of the new players in public theatres—the object being in each instance the assertion of the authority of the royal family over the public stage at large. (See *History of the Stage*, p. 206.) And in any case this 'innovation' could not have resulted in anything that could be described as an 'inhibition.' Possibly Mr. Fleay is right in supposing the 'innovation' to refer broadly to the Puritan movement, which very distinctly asserted itself on the occasion of the new sovereign's arrival in London; and the 'inhibition' may conceivably be a mere generalisation from the prohibition of Sabbath performances in the Royal Proclamation then issued—but this is a hypothesis which I merely throw out in passing. There are other indications in the text of the First Quarto which strengthen the supposition of its text having been put together in 1601 or rather earlier; the 'undiscovered country' in the first sketch of Hamlet's most famous soliloquy can hardly have been introduced without a remembrance of two lines in Marlowe's *Edward II* (act v. sc. 6), published in 1598. It is this very soliloquy which has been widely held to recall ideas in Montaigne (i. 19), although, as Elze points out (*Jahrbuch*, vol. vii, 1872, p. 33), there can be no question of actual appropriation in this or similar passages. Still less can they be regarded as a deliberate attack upon Montaigne's philosophy, as seems to be contended by Mr. Jacob Feis' ingenious but unconvincing volume, *Shakespeare and Montaigne* (1884). In any case, it is worthy of notice that Florio's translation of Montaigne's *Essays* was entered at Stationers' Hall in 1599, although not known to have been published till 1603. See Sir W. H. Bailey, *Shakespeare and Montaigne* (Manchester, 1895.) The solitary reference in a contemporary writer bearing on Shakspere's share of the First Quarto text, is Gabriel Harvey's note that Shakspere's 'Lucrece, and his tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke, have it in them to please the wiser sort.' The copy of Speght's *Chaucer*, 1598, in which this note was written has since perished; and Malone, although he omits to state whether the date 1598 was added in Harvey's hand, doubted whether the note was written after 1600, in which year Fairfax's translation of *Tasso*, mentioned in another note, was published. (See *Centurie of Prayse*, p. 30.) Several passages, however, in the First Quarto suit the date assigned to it, and several allusions to its text have been found in contemporary authors. Some of these were already pointed out by John Sterling in *The Westminster Review*, 1838. Among the former is the very pointed reprimand, in the advice to the players, of a clown who 'speakes more than is set downe.' The reflexion, generic as it might seem to be, has been thought to have had a special reference to Kemp, who on his return from his continental dance in 1602 had ceased to be a member of the Lord Chamberlain's company; but of this kind of professional 'revenge' Shakspere, whom Part III of *The*

Returne from Parnassus (acted December, 1601) had so intimately associated with Kemp, may assuredly be acquitted. The allusions in other works need not, as a rule, be referred to the text of the First Quarto as distinct from the later texts; but the saying in Dekker's *Satiro-Mastix* (acted and printed 1602), of Tucca, who afterwards comes on the stage followed by his boy with two pictures under his cloak, 'My name's Hamlet-Revenge,' was in all probability suggested by the original title as well as by a passage in the text of the play. (See, however, below as to this collocation.)

The supposed allegorical significance of Shakspere's tragedy, for which Mr. R. French (*Shakspereana Genealogica*, pp. 301 *seqq.*) has been fortunate enough to discover a complete key, is presumably intended to hold good of the first almost as completely as of later editions. 'Nearly all its personages are in one way or other connected with the history of Sir Philip Sidney, who seems by common consent to stand for young Hamlet.' Burghley is of course Polonius; a deeper mystery lies concealed in the statement that 'the usurping Claudius of the drama has been regarded as a satire on the Lord Keeper, Sir Nicholas Bacon, *not of course with reference to crime*.' More recently, Mr. J. T. Foard (in *The Manchester Quarterly*, 1889) and Professor Conrad (in *Preussische Jahrbücher*, 1895) have contended that Hamlet was intended for Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex. But neither into these arguments is it possible here to enter, nor into the striking analogies which have been pointed out between the guilt of Hamlet's mother and the crime imputed to Mary Queen of Scots; nor, again, can further notice be taken of the allusions which have, with less verisimilitude, been thought traceable in the character of Hamlet and its developement, to certain moral peculiarities and personal experiences of King James VI in the period preceding his accession to the English throne. (See K. Silberschlag, *Shakespeare's Hamlet, seine Quellen und politischen Beziehungen*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xii, 1877.)

From 1604 onwards, references or allusions to *Hamlet* abound in our literature; and of these the play as printed in the Second Quarto may be held to be the subject. Anthony Scoloker in his *Daiphantus* (1604) offers a glimpse of the stage Hamlet, neither fully clothed nor in his right mind; Marston in *The Malecontent* (1604) cites Hamlet's unfilial appeal to the Ghost as old 'true-penny'; the authors of *Eastward Ho*, with more malice than wit, introduce a footman named Hamlet, who calls for his lady's coach, as poor Ophelia called for her own, in such hot haste that he is asked, 'Art thou madde'? (See for these and other quotations, *Centurie of Prayse*, pp. 64 *seqq.*, and cf. the laboured attempt of Mr. Jacob Feis (*u. s.*, pp. 131 *seqq.*) to show that after Shakspere had in *Hamlet* administered a 'purge' in reply to the 'pill' intended for him in *The Poetaster*, Ben Jonson and his friends, on behalf of the 'Florio-Montaigne party' to which they belonged, returned to the attack.)

To return, however, to the First Quarto, a principal reason for refusing to accept the supposition that it is a purely Shaksperean work, is to be found in the fact that no connexion whatever can be discovered between Shakspere's and any previous treatment of the theme of *Hamlet*. It may be surmised that the play out of which, under Shakspere's hands, grew the version which we have before us in the First Quarto, was either actually, or in substance, the same as that stated by Henslowe to have been performed (apparently not as a new play) on June 9, 1594. An allusion to 'the vizard of the ghost which cried so miserably at y^e theator, *Hamlet, revenge*' occurs in Lodge's tract, *Wits Miserie and Worlds Madnesse: disclosing the Deuils Incarnat of this Age*, printed in 1596. But, so much earlier as 1589, or perhaps even 1587, Nashe in his 'Epistle to the Gentlemen Students of the Two Universities,' prefixed to Greene's *Arcadia*, or *Menaphon*, had among incompetent 'indeuors of art' mentioned 'whole *Hamlets*, I should say, handfulls, of tragical speaches.' There is no indication whatever in this passage of any personal malice on the part of Nashe against Shakspere. On July 7, 1602, Henslowe notes in his *Diary* a payment to Henry Chettle 'in earneste of a tragedy called a *Danyshe tragedye*.' What the subject of this play may have been, is unknown; Chettle's tragedy of *Hoffman, or a Revenge for a Father*, of which the scene is laid about Danzig, and which in subject bears a certain resemblance to *Hamlet* (cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 427–8), was in preparation in December of the same year. (See Henslowe's *Diary*, p. 229.) A German play on the subject of *Hamlet* was acted by English players in Germany under the title of *Der Bestrafte Brudermord, oder Prinz Hamlet aus Dännemark*, at a date which Cohn asserts to have been 'about the year 1603,' but which in point of fact is not so precisely determinable. (This play is reprinted by Cohn, *u. s.*, pp. 236 *seqq.*, with an English version by Miss Georgina Archer; also in Dr. R. G. Latham's *Two Dissertations on the Hamlet of Saxo-Grammaticus and of Shakespear*, 1872; and a closer English version of it is given by Mr. Furness in vol. ii. pp. 121 *seqq.* of his *New Variorum* edition.) Unfortunately, it cannot be traced back further than to a manuscript copy bearing date Pretz (query Gräz?), 1710; it was not included among the *English Comedies and Tragedies* printed in 1720; and it cannot be shown to have been acted before 1726, when it appears to have been performed at Dresden. (See Furness, *u. s.*, p. 117.) In this play, as already noted, the character of Corambus corresponds to that which from the Second Quarto onwards was known as that of Polonius. The name of the king, Hamlet's uncle, is here Erico, just as in the tale of *Argentile and Cuaran* in Warner's *Albion's England* the corresponding personage is called Eric—a circumstance attributed by Latham to the possible existence of some *Gesta Erici* (or *Eorici*) *Regis*, and conceivably accounting for the origin of Shakspere's imaginary *Yorick*, a name explained by others as derived from Rorick (the name of Hamlet's grandfather on the mother's side in Saxo-Grammaticus!) or from the Danish form of our George. I feel by no means sure that this German play represents the earlier English *Hamlet* which Shakspere may be held to have re-fashioned in the text of the First Quarto. The allegorical figures of the Prologue accord, indeed, with such a conjecture; while the device of the play within the play resembles that of the *Spanish Tragedy*, whose author, Thomas Kyd, has on the strength of this and other resemblances been credited with the authorship of the earlier English *Hamlet.* But the combined meagreness and elaboration of the German drama, which follows the action of the First Quarto text in its earlier part, while in the later it introduces the redundancies of the Court Fool Phantasmo and other characters, are perfectly explicable on the opposite hypothesis, that it was a later adaptation, for strollers' purposes, of a play which, to say the least, had already undergone Shakspere's treatment. (This supposition seems on the whole to be confirmed by the results of the careful examination of the German play by G. Tanger, *Der bestrafte Brudermord, &c., und sein Verhältniss zu Shakespeare's Hamlet*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xxiii, 1888.)

It remains briefly to notice the source whence the author of the earliest English dramatic treatment of the story of *Hamlet*—and through him indirectly Shakspere—derived the materials for his plot. This source is generally held to have been the *Hystorie of Hamblet*, translated from the third story in vol. v of Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques*, which is (from the Dedication) known to have been written in 1570, and which was published in that year or very soon afterwards. It must be allowed that no copy of the *Hystorie of Hamblet* is extant bearing an earlier date than 1608, and that the current assumption of its having been probably published many years previously,—possibly as early as 1580,—is pure conjecture. (See *Jahrbuch*, vol. xiv, 1879, p. 347.) The *Hystorie of Hamblet* (reprinted in vol. i of Collier's *Shakespeare's Library* and in vol. ii of Mr. Furness' *New Variorum* edition of *Hamlet*) diverges from the drama in the latter parts of the story, and the names in the former are different from the names of Shakspere's characters except in the instances of Hamlet himself and of his mother, called in the novel 'Geruth.' It is further noticeable that, as pointed out by Elze, the English translator differs from his French original in the management of the scene between Hamlet and his mother, and that the exclamation of Hamlet 'A rat! a rat!' when he becomes aware of the presence of the counsellor behind the arras, is to be found in the *Hystorie*, but not in Belleforest. But I perceive no reason for crediting the author of the early play rather than the translator with these 'additions.' On the general question, it can but be urged that a prose tale, containing the mere outline of a story already well known on the stage,—if indeed it was not the plot of a celebrated play,—is far more likely to have been for the first time printed by so old a hand as Thomas Pavier, than to have been merely reprinted by him from a much earlier edition. For the *Hystorie* lacks many of the incidents and characters of the earliest dramatic text, including the device of the play within the play, which the first dramatic treatment to the story furnished a natural occasion for superadding. It might have been copied from *The Spanish Tragedy*, supposing this to have preceded in date the first English play of Hamlet. In the old play called *A Warning for Faire Women* (printed in 1599, but doubtless acted much earlier, being founded on an occurrence of 1573), a woman who had murdered her husband is said to have confessed the crime after seeing a similar one represented on the stage. (A similar story is related of Napoleon, who is said to have been reminded by a performance of *Les États de Blois* at St. Cloud of the murder of the Duc d'Enghien. See Muret, *L'Histoire sur le Théâtre*, vol. i. p. 235.) Hamlet's statement that the play acted at his request is 'the image of a murder done in Vienna'—which the First Quarto prints 'Guiana'—suggests that some other play or novel with the same subject was in existence; none, however, has been discovered. For the rest, the device of the play within the play, which seems to tell with so perennial a freshness upon the imagination of theatrical audiences, recurs in the most various spheres and periods of dramatic history. It was known to the Indian stage (see act vii of *Uttara-Ráma-Charitra*, Wilson's *Theatre of the Hindus*, vol. i. p. 374 and *note*.) To trace further back the sources of Belleforest's novel and its English translation is not necessarily to exhaust the history of Shakspere's theme. (Dr. Bell's attempt to find the origin of the English *Hamlet* in Hans Sachs need perhaps not detain us.) Although, however, Belleforest and his English translator omitted salient points both in the story and in the character of the *Hamlet* taken over by them from Saxo-Grammaticus, and although Shakspere in his turn transformed the story of the novel, yet a comparison between the version of the Danish historian and that of the English dramatist is full of interest. The story of Amleth, as given in the *Historia Danica* begun by Saxo-Grammaticus after 1177, divides itself into two parts, of which the earlier only (forming the closing portion of Book iii) contains analogies to the story of Hamlet. Here we have the murder of Amleth's father and the incestuous marriage of his mother, the feigned madness of Amleth, and his revenge—although the character of Amleth's madness is never doubtful like Hamlet's, and his revenge is executed after a wholly different fashion. Here we also find suggestions of the characters of Ophelia and Horatio, and of that of Polonius, together with traits which reappear in the character of Hamlet himself, such as his strange propensity to riddles. Here, above all, we have in germ the scene between Hamlet and his mother, including his speech of reproof to her in some of its actual features, and the death of the listener 'under the straw.' (See the Appendix *On Saxo's Hamlet* in Mr. Oliver Elton's translation of *The First Nine Books of the Danish History of Saxo-Grammaticus*, 1894.) In Belleforest, too, Hamlet merely 'counterfeits the madman'; and the French novelist already dwells upon the similarity of this device to those adopted by David and by Brutus. (The Roman tale is found in Livy and Valerius Maximus, from both of whom Saxo seems to have taken over traits, as well as in Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and is alluded to by Ovid. See Elton, *u. s.*, pp. 406 *seqq.*) Into the question of early Icelandic traditions which may have been known to Saxo, and of treatments of the Amleth-myth in Norse literature after him, the present is not the place to enter; still less would it be to the purpose to touch on their relation to Aryan mythology at large, which, according to Professor A. de Gubernatis, is remarkably catholic. The analogy between Hamlet and Orestes has of course attracted special notice.—A faint resemblance, of which I venture to think too much has been made, to Hamlet's assumption of madness is to be found in the *Lay of Havelok the Dane* (see Professor Skeat's edition in the *Extra Series* of the *Early English Text Society*, 1868); the motive reappears in several chronicles, and was adapted by Warner from Caxton's edition of the *Brut* in the shape of the tale of *Argentile and Cuaran* in his *Albion's England* (reprinted in Percy's *Reliques*).

So much for the 'historical' or legendary Hamlet, whose grave is still shown to the credulous on a wooded hill near Elsinore. Goethe is said to have entertained the notion of treating the subject of *Hamlet* 'freely after Saxo-Grammaticus,' and therefore independently of Shakspere; but it should be noticed that Book iv of the *Danish History*, and indeed the whole of Amleth's British experiences, are left wholly untouched by the English poet.

A few detached points may be noticed in conclusion. Of Polonius' advice to Laertes (act i. sc. 3) Lyly's advice of Euphues to Philautus (*Euphues and his England*, p. 430, Arber's edition) has been often pointed out as the prototype; Professor Herford, however (*A few suggestions on Greene's Romances and Shakspere* in *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1888), shows that the counsel given to Philador by his father in Greene's *Menaphon* (1590) in the circumstances of its delivery stands nearer to the Shaksperean passages. I may add that Clerophontes' advice to his son Gwydonius, when about to travel, in Greene's *Carde of Fancie* (1587, but supposed to have been first printed three years earlier), recalls after a fashion the paternal exhortation of Polonius; indeed, in the same tractate is to be found another admonition of a not very different kind, addressed by King Orlanio to an 'honoured old Widdowe' called Madam Melytha, on entrusting to her the supervision of his daughter. (Professor A. Stern has directed attention to a letter of James I to Prince Henry, dated 1603, and cited by E. Edwards, *Lives of the Founders of the British Museum* (1870), bearing a curious resemblance in several points to Polonius' advice to Laertes.) An analogy has likewise been found in the advice of a father to his son going to the wars in Calderon's *El Alcalde de Zalamea* (pr. 1653). (See Klein, vol. xi. Part II. p. 263; and cf. *Gentlemen's Magazine*, May 1873, Art. *Table-Talk.*)—'Hercules and his load,' which in the passage already cited (act ii. sc. 2) the boy-actors are said to 'carry away,' refers to the sign of the Globe Theatre, Hercules carrying the 'great globe itself.'—Much speculation has been excited on the subject of Hamlet's request to the players, in the same scene, to insert in their play 'a speech of some dozen or sixteene lines'; this, however, is a matter not of evidence, but of interpretation. (See the arguments of Mr. W. T. Malleson and the late Sir John Seeley, *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1874, pp. 465–498.—The original suggestion of the line (*ib.*)

'What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,'

has been ingeniously traced by Mr. G. E. Merindin (*Athenaeum*, April 11, 1876) to a saying of Alexander of Pherae (Plutarch, *Pelopidas*, ch. xxi).

It would be futile to attempt here to trace the innumerable reminiscences of *Hamlet* in later plays, or the suggestions offered by it to their authors. As to the resemblances to *Hamlet* in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Philaster*, see the remarks on that play below. *The Grave-Makers out of Hamlet*, was one of the drolls probably acted during the period of the suppression of the theatres, and printed in Kirkman's *The Wits* (1672). Some observations on the general position of this tragedy among Shakspere's plays will be added elsewhere; it is interesting to be informed that Shakspere's literary ascendancy in Sweden was established through a translation of *Hamlet* (1819), although this had been preceded by translations of other Shaksperean plays. (See W. Bolin, *Hamlet in Schweden*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xiv, 1879.) Perhaps I may cite the late Mr. Frank A. Marshall's *Study of Hamlet* (1875), as most directly, among modern works on the subject with which I am acquainted, exhibiting the relations between the modern English stage and the foremost tragedy of our national theatre.

(27) OTHELLO, THE MOOR OF VENICE. III b. *Mal.* 24. E. 1621. P. 1622.

This play was entered on the Register in 1621, and printed in quarto in the following year, 'as it hath been diverse times acted at the Globe and at the Black Friars.' This edition, which was not used in the First Folio, was reprinted in 1629. The internal evidence of character and manner leave us in no difficulty about assigning to *Othello* a date near to those of *Macbeth* and *Lear*—a conclusion fairly supported by the tests of versification, although the 'light endings' in *Macbeth* are more frequent than in the two other plays. Professor Dowden has forcibly shown how *Othello* belongs to—or as he thinks begins—the group of tragedies of passion ending in unhappiness, unlike the plays of Shakspere's last period, where the violence of the storm subsides into the calm of peace and reconciliation. And this agrees with such external evidence as we possess with regard to the date of *Othello.* No great importance need be attached to resemblances to passages in this play, which have been discovered in works dating from the period 1599–1601. Even if, as seems probable, Shakspere first became acquainted with—

> 'men, whose heads
> Do grow beneath their shoulders'—

in Raleigh's *Discovery of Guyana* (1600), the description would have been likely enough to linger in his memory. On the other hand, the passage in *The First Part* (printed 1604) of Dekker and Middleton's *The Honest Whore*, which purported to include *The Humours of the Patient Man* (cf. Henslowe's *Diary*, p. 232), act i. sc. 1:

> —'thou kill'st her now again,
> And art more savage then a barbarous Moor'—

can hardly but allude to *Othello*; and this is in accordance with the assertion of Malone: 'We know *Othello* was acted in 1604.' It is true that Boswell (*Variorum* edn., vol. ii. p. 404) confesses that the evidence on which Malone based this statement has not been discovered, while Mr. Fleay's assertion that Malone 'possessed a transcript of the genuine entry in the clerks' accounts' is, so far as I know, likewise unproved. But the evidence in favour of the date 1604 seems sufficient, so that the play can be taken considerably further back than April 30, 1610, when Duke Lewis Frederick of Württemberg-Mömpelgard saw it performed at the Globe. (See the extract from the *Journal* of his Secretary, Wurmsser von Wendenheym, reprinted in *Centurie of Prayse*, p. 98.)

The story of *Othello*, but without the name, first appears in Cinthio's *Hecatommithi* (i. 3. 7), of which a French translation by Chappuys had appeared in 1584. (The Italian tale, together with a late English version (1795), is reprinted in vol. ii of Collier's *Shakespeare's Library*.) Here is to be found, together with the name of Desdemona, little more than the skeleton of Shakspere's plot, and even this in a form which the dramatist in many respects re-cast. Steevens states that the names of Othello and Iago are both introduced into the narrative included in the collection entitled *God's Revenge against Adultery*, added by Samuel Pordage to John Reynold's *Triumphs of God's Revenge against Murder*, in the sixth edition of that book (1669). An Italian ballad is said to exist containing the same names, but exhibiting no further resemblance to the story of Shakspere's play. (On the antiquity of the English ballad called *The Tragedie of Othello the Moor*, printed by Collin in *New Particulars*, 1836, doubts were thrown by the late Dr. Ingleby in *The Academy*, April 1, 1876.) The late Mr. Rawdon L. Brown (cited by Simrock) suggested that the poet derived the story from the personal communications of the Venetian embassy which was in London in the years 1613–6; but this is put out of the question by the date of the play. Yet the statement extracted by Mr. Rawdon Brown from the diaries of Marino Sanuto, according to which Cristofalo Moro was lieutenant of Cyprus for Venice in the beginning of the sixteenth century, and returned from the island in 1508, *because he had lost his wife*, points to a historical foundation of the story, with which Shakspere doubtless became acquainted through Cinthio or a translation of that author.

Klein (vol. v. p. 385) has pointed out resemblances of detail, as well as a striking likeness to the great scene in which Othello's mind is poisoned by Iago, in L. Dolce's *Marianna* (1565), which play was imitated by a French tragedian, to whom again Voltaire is stated to have been indebted, in his *Mariamne* (1724). The Preface to Voltaire's first edition of this play is worth reading in connexion with the remark of Brandes, that Othello is the one domestic tragedy,—but a domestic tragedy as conceived by Shakspere,—which he has left to us.

The burden of Desdemona's willow-song (act iv. sc. 3) is the same as that of a ballad by John Heywood (see *Shakespeare Society's Papers*, vol. i. p. 44); in the latter, however, which is reprinted in Percy's *Reliques*, the complainant is a man. In Middleton's *Blurt, Master Constable*, reference seems to be made to this ballad (act i. sc. 1: 'Shall Camillo then sing Willow, willow, willow'). In *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (act iv. sc. 1) the gaoler's daughter in her madness is said to sing 'nothing but "Willow, willow, willow."' Cf. also Massinger's *The Maid of Honour* (act iv. sc. 5 and act v. sc. 1). Another song called *The Willow-Garland*, attributed to Edwards, is noted by Warton, *History of English Poetry*, sec. lii, *note*. Iago's verses about King Stephen are from an old ballad also reprinted by Percy; and the same legend is referred to by Greene in his *Quip for an Upstart Courtier* (licensed 1592).

Othello has always remained a favourite of the stage, by reason of the singular dramatic power of its plot, and because of the intense interest attaching to the treatment of the characters of Othello and

Iago. As to the ancient, I am strongly inclined to agree with the late Mr. Grant White (*On the acting of Iago* in *Studies in Shakespeare*), that his personality has been persistently misunderstood and misinterpreted by modern actors. Concerning Schiller's stage arrangement of Othello, see G. V. Vincke, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xv, 1880. Verdi's opera of *Othello* was produced at Milan in 1889.

(28) MACBETH. III b. *Mal.* 27. A. 1610.

This tragedy, whatever may have been the date of its composition and of its first production, was certainly performed at the Globe on April 20, 1610, when it was seen there by Simon Forman, the active-minded empiric, who gives a fairly complete account of it in his MS. notes on plays (now in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford), beginning with the '3 Women feiries or Nimphes,' and ending with the sleep-walking of 'mackbetes quen.' (See the extracts from *Dr. Forman's Book of Plays* in *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1875–6, Appendix II.) There can, however, be little doubt but that the play had been first put on the stage some years previously to the date of this particular performance, and at a time when the accession of the Scottish line to the English throne, and together with this went things Scottish in general, more largely occupied men's minds than could have been the case in 1610. Malone's attempt, indeed, to fix the date of the original production of *Macbeth* in 1606 is in itself by no means convincing; the original of the 'farmer that hang'd himself on the expectation of plenty' (act ii. sc. 3)—or rather of the sentiment that prompted the farmer's suicide—might have been met with at other seasons besides the summer of 1606, when barley and corn were about to fall in price; nor need the 'equivocator' in the same scene be supposed as a matter of course to be intended as an allusion to Father Garnet, and to the equivocation which in his trial in March of that year he was held to have openly avowed. On the other hand, the reference, manifestly meant to please the king, to the hereditary royal gift of 'touching for the evil' (act iv. sc. 3) can hardly belong to an earlier date than 1605, when as is stated in Camden's *Remains*, printed in that year, the subject had 'lately' become a subject of learned discussion; moreover, in 1603, James I showed much reluctance in consenting to 'touch,'and partly in deference to the Scotch ministers around him, 'made a public declaration of his fear lest he should incur the blame of superstition.' (See Gardiner's *History of England, &c.*, edn. 1883, vol. i. p. 152.) It has been further suggested, by Hunter, that the investiture on April 7, 1605, of Sir David Murray as Lord Scone was present to Shakspere's mind when he made Duncan transfer to Macbeth the traitorous thane of Cawdor's title and estate; for Sir David had been instrumental in the preservation of James' life at the time of the Gowrie conspiracy, and his reward had been the barony and one of the estates of the Earl of Gowrie. To these indications of the date of 1605 or 1606 has to be added a piece of direct external evidence, first pointed out by Farmer, and recalled by Dr. Hales (in a letter to *The Academy*, April 8, 1876). In a passage in *The Puritan, or, The Widow of Watling Street* (printed 1607) there is a slight but obvious allusion to Banquo's ghost. (See the passage in *Centurie of Prayse*, p. 78, where a further allusion to the ghost is cited from Beaumont and Fletcher's *Knight of the Burning Pestle*, (act v. sc. 1, Jasper's speech, written 1611). There can accordingly be but little doubt as to the approximate date of Shakspere's play; but that it was performed on the occasion of the festivities in celebration of King Christian IV of Denmark's visit to the English Court in 1606 is a mere (and an unnecessary) conjecture.

The famous comic actor of clowns' parts, William Kemp, in his *Kemp's Nine Daies Wonder, &c.* (1600; cf. *ante*, p. 472 *note*), professes to have come across 'a penny Poet, whose first making was the miserable story of Macdoel, or Macdobeth' (the pun obviously alludes to *Piers the Plowman*), 'or Macsomewhat, for I am sure a Mac it was, though I never had the man to see it.' Collier afterwards discovered the entry of such a ballad, together with another on *The Taming of a Shrew*, in the Stationers' Register for August 27, 1596; but I cannot think that these circumstances warrant the conclusion that in all probability an earlier play on the subject existed. (See, however, Fleay, *Life of Shakespeare*, pp. 241–2.) Nor is the statement (in *The Oxford Triumph*, 1605, and in *Rex Platonicus*, &c., by Isaac Wake, 1607) that James I on visiting Oxford in 1605 was greeted by the recital of some Latin verses, subsequently translated into English for the benefit of the Queen and Prince, founded on the prediction of the witches as to Banquo and Macbeth, of decisive moment as to the previous existence of a dramatic treatment of the subject. Indeed, there is no reason for supposing Shakspere to have *known* that the theme would be specially agreeable to King James; while the story of his autograph letter of thanks is of course a fable. Whether Shakspere was ever in Scotland is unknown; at all events, his imagination transported itself into Scotch scenery and its associations with almost unparalleled completeness and effect.

The remarkable relative brevity of this play (its actual length is less than half that of *Hamlet*) and the strange inequalities in this respect between the several parts of the play (Brandes points out that the scene between Macduff and Macbeth, act iv. sc. 3, though dramatically, in point of fact, superfluous, takes up as much as one-eighth of the whole) implies that the text as we have it had been materially abridged for stage-purposes. Even so, however, the Cambridge editors and Mr. Fleay have held that room was found in it for interpolations from Middleton's *The Witch*, acted 1622, but probably written a few years earlier. (The character of Hecate, and the songs in act iii. sc. 5 and act iv. sc. 1, are to be found in *The Witch*.) The probability is certainly strongly against the converse supposition. (See, however, Mr. J. A. Spalding, *On the Witch-Scenes in Macbeth*, in *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1877, pp. 27–40.) Ben Jonson's *Masque of Queens* (1609) may have owed something to both plays.

Shakspere derived his materials from Holinshed. (His narrative, cited from the edition of 1586, will be found, together with an extract from Wyntoun's *Chronicle*, the scenes from *The Witch*, and D'Avenant's version of *Macbeth*, in Mr. Howard Furness' *New Variorum* edition, 1873.) Holinshed found the story of Macbeth in Bellenden's English translation (1536) of the Latin *Historia Scotorum* of Hector Boece (1526). In this narrative (which may be read in Collier's *Shakespeare's Library*, vol. ii) all the incidents of which the action of Shakspere's play consists are to be found in the same order; nothing, as Gervinus says, was wanting for the dramatic treatment of the subject except its psychological developement. Even Lady Macbeth seems to have been suggested by another passage in Holinshed,—the murder of King Duffe by Donwald at Forres,—from which Shakspere took many of the details of the murder of Duncan. But the sleep-walking scene was of course his own invention. A metrical version of the story occurs in Wyntoun's *Chronicle of Scotland* (1400 *circ.*). Jacob Grimm, quoted by Simrock, is reminded by Lady Macbeth of Tanaquil, who, like Eve, incites her husband to high things. Grimm also compares the old German story of King Grünewald. This story, however, ends with the incident of the moving wood; and the besieged king's daughter does not tempt him to crime, but merely encourages him to resistance. In fact, Simrock compares her influence upon her father to that of the Witches, not to that of Lady Macbeth, upon the hero. The untimely birth of Macduff is shown by Simrock to be a feature which in Germanic mythology invariably indicates heroic strength. (The late Sir G. W. Cox, in his *Mythology of the Aryan Nations*, i. 312, compared Asklepios and Dionysos, Sigurd and Tristram, as 'sons of sorrow born to do great things.') Halliwell-Phillipps adduces parallel instances to the notion of the moving wood. (Another has been found in Arab tradition, said to date from the times before Mohammed. See *The Academy*, February 28, 1874.) The incident of Banquo's Ghost, again, is apparently Shakspere's own invention. Some of the details connected with the Witches seem due, in the case both of *Macbeth* and of Middleton's *Witch*, to Reginald Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584). The story of Macbeth and the Witches—

> —'three Virgins wondrous fair
> As well in habit as in feature rare'—

is referred to in Thomas Heywood's *Hierarchie of the Blessed Angels* (Bk. viii), 1635.

Buchanan, of whose *Rerum Scoticarum Historia* (Edinburgh, 1528) no English translation existed in Shakspere's time, while refusing to believe the marvellous parts of the story, and considering them *theatris aut Milesiis fabulis aptiora quam historiae*, rationalistically accounts for some of them. As to the real history of the war with Macbeth, see Freeman's *Norman Conquest*, vol. ii. Note X; and compare as to the historical Macbeth a paper in *Notes and Queries*, 3rd S., x, September 15, 1866.

Macbeth, reproduced with additions and 'amendments' by D'Avenant in 1674 (some of the alterations being taken from Middleton's *Witch*), was quoted in this form in *The Tatler*. Some of D'Avenant's interpolated choruses are, I believe, still in use on the stage. (See N. Delius, *Shakespeare's Macbeth und Davenant's Macbeth*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xx, 1885. a remarkably suggestive analysis.)

Schiller's fine version of *Macbeth*, in which however the characteristic features of the Witches are entirely changed, was produced in 1804.

Shakspere's play—or rather Shakspere's character—of *Macbeth* has given rise to perhaps more paradoxical interpretations, both on and off the stage, than any similar 'problem' bequeathed by him to the perverseness of posterity. Yet neither a mutilated text nor a mistaken rendering has been able to disguise from unsophisticated audiences either the meaning or the moral of Macbeth's rise and fall.

(29) KING LEAR. III c. *Mal.* 25. A. 1606. E. 1607. P. 1608.

As to the date of this tragedy, we know that it was acted at Whitehall upon St. Stephen's night (December 26), 1606, 'before the king's majesty, by his majesty's servants playing usually at the Globe upon the Bankside'; where it may therefore be presumed to have been previously performed. It was entered on the Stationers' Register on November 26, 1607, and printed in 1608. That it was not written before 1603, seems to follow (though not with absolute certainty) from the passage (act iii. sc. 4) where Edgar mentions the names of infernal spirits to all appearance borrowed from Archbishop Harsnett's *Declaration of egregious Popish Impostures* (practised by a set of priests), published in that year. Stress has been laid upon the passage in act i. sc. 2 referring to 'the late eclipses in the sun and moon,' and subsequent allusions to the subject in the same scene. John Harvey of King's Lynn, in a book called *A Discoursive Probleme Concerning Prophecies* (1588), had mentioned a series of 'concourses' in the same month of solar and lunar eclipses, to be expected in the years 1590, 1598, 1601, and 1605 (October), the last-named, which would suit the date of the play, being described by him as the most notable. Shakspere might of course have referred to the eclipses of 1605 before their actual occurrence (as he seems to do in *Othello*, act v. sc. 2); but the express mention of them in *King Lear* as 'these late eclipses,' can hardly have been introduced before October in that year. We may accordingly conclude that the play remained on the stage to near the end of 1605, although it had probably been produced there before May 8 of that year. The old play of *King Leir*, to be referred to immediately, was entered on the Register as *The Tragical History of King Leir and his Three Daughters, &c., as it hath been divers and sundry times acted*; for the old play neither is, nor had been previously called, a tragedy; it is not known to have been acted later than 1594; and there can be little doubt that its republication in 1605 was suggested by the performance of Shakspere's tragedy, for which the printer may have intended it to be mistaken. (See Fleay's *Life of Shakespeare*, pp. 237–8, and the extract from his article on *The Date and Text of King Lear* (in Robinson's *Epitome of Literature*, August 1, 1879) in Mr. H. H. Furness' *New Variorum* edition, 1880, pp. 381–2.)

The text of this tragedy has given rise to much conflict of opinion. The first quarto, published in 1608, with an elaborate title-page, doubtless of the printer's making, was followed by another quarto, printed in the same year, with an almost identical title-page, but with so many textual differences as to constitute it a separate edition. Not only, however, is the question as to the priority between these two 1608 quartos merely a matter of internal evidence (and this doubtful in kind), but Halliwell-Phillipps says that of the twelve extant copies of what is usually regarded as the first quarto no two are exactly alike. Indeed, the existence of a third quarto of 1608 was in consequence maintained; but this has been shown by the Cambridge editors to be unproved.

The relations between the text of the quartos and that of the first folio have been very clearly expounded by Delius, of whose essay *Über den ursprünglichen Text des King Lear*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. x, 1875, an English translation *On the Quarto and Folio of King Lear* appeared in the *Transactions of the New Shakspere Society*, 1875. He has shown that the variations in the quarto as compared with the folio text may in the present instance be generally set down to the extraordinary blunders of a printer, who when he could not read a word substituted another that most readily suited the *ductus literarum* without reference to meaning, and who omitted from sheer carelessness. Thus, though originally in possession of a copy of the stage MS. of *King Lear*, 'he produced a text which differed as much from the original words of the poet as that of the editor of *Richard III*, who failed from doing too much.' Delius has further shown that the folio edition must have been made from a later stage copy than the quartos; for the considerable omissions in the folio are clearly due to the demands of the actors, not to any revision properly so called, and least of all to one by the poet himself. That such a revision is out of the question has been also very forcibly argued by the late Dr. A. Schmidt (see an abridgement of part of his essay on the text of *King Lear*, *ap.* Furness, pp. 367–373).

Shakspere's tragedy was founded upon *The True Chronicle History of King Leir and his Three Daughters, Gonorill, Ragan, and Cordella*, acted by Henslowe's company on April 6, 1593, entered on the Stationers' Register in 1594, and probably printed soon afterwards. (As to this play, see *ante*, vol. i. pp. 224–5, where the chief differences between it and Shakspere's *King Lear* are pointed out.) It ends happily, Lear and Perillus, who have escaped to France, being well received there by Cordelia and her husband, and with their aid restored to his British throne. The beginning of the old play, on the other hand, is perhaps in so far to be commended above the opening of Shakspere's tragedy, that in the former the conduct of the daughters is perhaps more naturally accounted for. Gonorill and Ragan are informed of the proposed action of their father beforehand, whereas Cordella is taken by surprise; which furnishes an additional reason for the difference in their respective answers. (For the motive of the opening, cf. the rather ingenious device of the *Third Tale* (in honour of Silence) in Greene's *Penelope's Web* (1587). See also below as to the opening of *Gorboduc*.)

The author of the old play doubtless derived his materials from Holinshed, if not directly from Geoffrey of Monmouth's Chronicle upon which Holinshed based his narrative. Geoffrey, again, may have derived the story from an old Welsh chronicle ascribed to Bishop Tyrsilios (seventh century); but he was doubtless acquainted with the *Gesta Romanorum*, where the hero of an identical story is the Emperor Theodosius. The story of King Lear was retold in the chronicle of Robert of Gloucester, and in that of Hardyng. With slight variations of expression it reappears in the story of Ina, King of the West-Saxons, published in Camden's *Remains* (1605), after the production of Shakspere's tragedy. Spenser in *The Faerie Queene* (ii. 10. 27–32) narrates the story of King Lear in the chronicle of 'Briton Kings from Brute to Uther's ragne' which Prince Arthur reads in the House of Temperance; the story here ends as in the old plays, and the reply of Cordelia varies in the same way as in all the earlier sources from the form given to it in Shakspere. From Spenser Shakspere seems to have taken nothing except perhaps the precise form of Cordelia's name. Higgins, in the fourth edition of *The Mirror for Magistrates* (1587), and Warner in his *Albion's England*, likewise versified the subject; but Shakspere owes nothing to either. A ballad of *The Death of King Leir and his three Daughters* (printed by Percy), which introduces the madness, was on the other hand unmistakeably of a later date than Shakspere's tragedy; the author of it had apparently looked into Holinshed. The idea of the division of the King's lands is to be found in *Gorboduc* (cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 200, *note*); it is of course derived from the Œdipodean story. The beginning of *Locrine* in this respect resembles that of *King Lear*. Professor Angelo de Gubernatis has discovered the story of King Lear 'in embryo' in the

Indian legends of Dîrghatamas and Yayâtis (see a review of his *Zoological Mythology*, 1872, in the *Saturday Review*, January 18, 1873). The main features of the story are familiar to old Germanic, as well as to other groups of, legend.

The episode of Gloster and his two sons was taken by Shakspere from Bk. ii. of Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* (1590), where the King of Paphlagonia corresponds to Gloster. (The episode is reprinted by Collier, *u. s.*) Simrock dwells on the resemblance between the relation of Edmund to the two wicked sisters and Livy's narrative concerning the daughters of Servius and Tullius.

Harsnett's tract has been already referred to as the probable source of some of the Black Magic learning introduced into this play. 'The Foul Flibbertigibbet' appears already in one of John Heywood's *Epigrams* (60. *Of callyng one* flebergebit).

(30) TIMON OF ATHENS. III e. *Mal.* 33. †

This play was not printed, so far as is known, before the First Folio, where its full title stands as *The Life of Tymon of Athens.* Probably, few will at the present day be inclined to agree with the opinion, in which however Coleridge and Schlegel, Gervinus and Ulrici concurred, that the whole of *Timon of Athens* is from Shakspere's hand. Yet Dr. W. Wendelandt, in his essay *Timon von Athen*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xxiii, 1888, contends at great length that the play as we have it is from first to last a rough draft (*Kladde*) of Shakspere's composition—possibly attempted by him as a final 'gathering-up of his powers' before he 'closed his eyes for ever.' That it was in his later years that Shakspere was attracted by the theme of this play is intrinsically probable;—Rapp, *Englisches Theater*, aptly compares the date of Molière's *Misanthrope*, written in its author's forty-third year. But, if conjecture on this head is to be held permissible at all, the choice of such a theme as that of Timon would most readily associate itself with the years in which grief and disappointment had not yet been assuaged by the calm of renunciation which seems to pervade the last period of Shakspere's dramatic authorship. The tests of versification and style, in so far as they can be applied to a play generally held to be of dual authorship, appear to agree with the conclusion that Shakspere's work in *Timon of Athens* belongs to a period of his activity as a dramatist preceding (but at no long interval) that of the latest group among his plays. No other indication as to date exists in the present instance; although it is certainly probable enough that an interest in the character of Timon was first aroused in Shakspere when he was reading Plutarch's life of Antonius (no doubt in North's translation), before writing *Antony and Cleopatra*, which in all probability (see below) was first performed in 1608, or at a slightly earlier date.

While the large majority of recent commentators agree in supposing *Timon of Athens*, as printed in the First Folio, to be a work of which Shakspere was only in part author, they differ as to the probable nature and history of the relations between his share in the play and the remainder. The more general view is that of the Cambridge editors, according to which Shakspere elaborated an earlier play, written for the most part either in prose or in very irregular verse. Knight also assumed an original play distinct from Shakspere's; and Delius developed the same theory in his essay *Über Shakespeare's Timon of Athens*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. ii, 1867.

It will be convenient to state at once that the play in question cannot have been that which was actually in existence in 1600, and which was edited by Dyce for the (Old) *Shakespeare Society*, 1842. This production is considered by Dyce to have been evidently intended for the delectation of an academical audience, and never to have been performed on the London stage. There is no reason for supposing Shakspere to have been acquainted with it; although it contains a banquet-scene which might be held to have suggested act iii. sc. 6 in the play known as his. The 'stones' spoken of figuratively at the end of that scene are in the old play actually thrown; in the Shaksperean version Timon throws dishes. The old play also borrows from Lucian the incident of Timon becoming possessed of large quantities of gold, by digging them up in the wood.

No traces remain of any old play such as Shakspere might have used, refashioning it by alterations and additions into the *Timon of Athens* printed in the First Folio. The allusions which have been discovered in Guilpin's *Skialetheia* (1598) and in *Jack Drum's Entertainment* (acted 1601) are in fact only to the personage of Timon, and may not refer to a play at all. Delius has conjectured the author of the supposed earlier drama to have been George Wilkins, who wrote the novel of *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, and, as Delius thinks, also the play adapted by Shakspere under that name. Opinions have naturally varied as to the extent of Shakspere's supposed additions. Knight considered act i. sc. 1 (from the entrance of Apemantus) and sc. 2, act iii. scenes 1, 2, 3 (perhaps 4), 5, 6 (except the speech 'May you a better feast,' &c.), act iv. sc. 2 (the conclusion), sc. 3 (part), act v. sc. 1 (the beginning), and most of scenes 3 and 4, to be un-Shaksperean. Delius is generally in agreement with these conclusions; for his detailed analysis of the play see the article cited above. On the other hand, H. Bulthaupt, an adept in higher kinds of dramaturgy, is of opinion that Shakspere's share in *Timon* is insignificant. (See H. Conrad, *Shakespeare's und Bulthaupt's Timon*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xxix, 1894; the latter introduces many changes, and supplies the missing link between Timon and Alcibiades by providing the former with a daughter.)

A different hypothesis explanatory of the dual composition of *Timon of Athens* was, however, put forward by Tschischwitz, in an essay *Timon von Athen*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. iv, 1869, where it was attempted to show that the play, as we possess it, is an original work of Shakspere's, which was afterwards, perhaps after his death, altered by another hand. This theory has been since, independently of course, put forward by Mr. Fleay, whose essay *On the Authorship of Timon of Athens*, followed by an edition of *The Life of Tymon of Athens*, 'the usual insertions by another hand in the Play being left out,' furnishes a striking illustration of his critical ability. (See *Transactions of the New Shakspere Society*, 1874.) He accounts with much verisimilitude for the introduction of *Timon of Athens* into the First Folio, where, probably in consequence of the transfer of *Troïlus and Cressida* from the place among the tragedies which it had at first been intended to fill, a gap had been left which, with the exception of *Pericles of Tyre* and *Timon*, no play was at hand to supply, and which it seemed preferable to fill by the latter, when rapidly completed for the purpose, than by the former, already unsatisfactorily finished by another hand. His supposition that Cyril Tourneur was the playwright employed to complete *Timon* rests chiefly on a metrical comparison, and must be regarded as hazardous. His distribution of the several portions of the play between Shakspere and the completer is not very materially different from that suggested by Knight.

The main source of the play of *Timon of Athens*, or, if any such existed, of the earlier play on which it was founded, was beyond doubt the novel *Of the strange and beastly nature of Timon of Athens, enemy to mankind, with his death, burial and epitaph*, in

Paynter's *Palace of Pleasure* (i. 28), published in 1566–7. But Shakspere must also have been acquainted with the curious *excursus*, if I may so call it, on the Athenian Timon in Plutarch's *Life of Antonius* (c. 70), through Sir Thomas North's translation of Amyot's French version (1579). In addition to this he might be supposed to have referred to Lucian's dialogue of *Timon*—indeed Tschischwitz insists that the character of Timon as treated by Shakspere accords with Lucian's rather than Plutarch's conception of it—but for the circumstance that no English, or even French, translation of Lucian is known to have existed at the time. Bojardo's *Timone* (produced before 1494, cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 228) is founded on Lucian's dialogue, of which Thomas Heywood in 1637 published a versified translation under the title of *Misanthropos, or The Man-hater* (included in vol. vi of the reprint of his *Dramatic Works*).

Among later adaptations of our play may be mentioned *The History of Timon of Athens, the Man-hater*, by Thomas Shadwell, 1678; another, by James Love (Dance), 1768; a third, by Richard Cumberland, 1771, who (like M. Bulthaupt) 'engrafted' on it 'the part of Evanthe for the purpose of writing up the character of Alcibiades (see his *Memoirs*, 4to, pp. 281 *seqq.*); and a fourth, by Thomas Hall, 1786. Destouches in *Le Dissipateur* (1736), notwithstanding his assertion that 'nature furnished him with his plan,' seems to have been inspired by *Timon*, but he completely transformed the character as well as the plot. (See L. Moland's Introduction to *Théâtre de Destouches*, 1878.)

(31) PERICLES, PRINCE OF TYRE. E. 1608. P. 1609. †

Entered on the Stationers' Register by one bookseller (Blount) in 1608, this play was published by another (Gosson) in 1609 as '*the late and much-admired play, called Pericles . . . as it hath been divers and sundry times acted by his Majesties Servants at the Globe on the Banck-side. By William Shakespeare.*' Several other quartos followed; but *Pericles* was not included by Heminge and Condell in the folio of 1623, nor in consequence was it printed in the second or in the first edition of the Third Folio, but it appeared in the third folio of 1664, and in the fourth of 1685.

The problem suggested by the text of this play, taken together with the fact of its exclusion from the First Folio, suggests much the same choice of solutions as those noticed in the case of *Timon of Athens*; only that the intrinsic improbability of Shakspere having written the whole of *Pericles* is almost such as to render argument on the subject unnecessary. To be sure, Dryden—probably without much reflexion on the subject—asserted in the Prologue to Charles D'Avenant's *Circe* (pr. 1677), that

> 'Shakespeare's own Muse his *Pericles* first bore,
> The Prince of Tyre was elder than the Moor';

and the view that *Pericles* was an early work of Shakspere's was among modern critics upheld by Ulrici. But the discrepancies between the earlier and the later portions of the play forbid us to follow this guidance. Twine's story, on which the play was substantially founded, had no doubt been published in an earlier edition than that of 1607, as it was entered on the Register in 1576. Apart from an entry of 'spangled hose in *Pericles*,' among the theatrical apparel mentioned by Edward Alleyn (according to Collier's *Memoirs*, p. 21, and corresponding to the description of the hero's wedding-dress in Twine's novel), no allusions which can be brought home to the play printed with Shakspere's name are to be found in any work bearing an earlier date than 1608. (Day's *Love Tricks*, a comedy printed in that year, cites the explanation of the large number of fishes to be seen in the sea given in *Pericles*, act ii. sc. 1. An anonymous poem called *Pimlyco* (1609), refers to '*Shore*' and '*Pericles*' as popular plays, though the publication of Thomas Heywood's *Edward IV*, which contains the whole story of Jane Shore, dates back as far as 1600. (See *Centurie of Prayse*, pp. 82, 89.) Ben Jonson's uncomplimentary insinuation—

> 'some mouldy tale
> Like *Pericles*, and stale
> As the shrieve's crusts, and nasty as his fish'—

occurs in the *Ode to Himself*, occasioned by the failure of *The New Inn* (1629).

Either, therefore, Shakspere must in *Pericles* be supposed to have completed the work of a predecessor, or a play left unfinished by him fell among artificers whose labours brought it to its present condition. It may be doubted whether the latter alternative was present to the minds of all the critics who approved the former. Coleridge, setting forth on the '*high priori*' tack, considered *Pericles* an apt illustration of the way in which Shakspere handled a piece which he was called upon to refit for representation. 'At first he proceeded with indifference, only now and then troubling himself to put in a thought or an image, but as he advanced he interested himself in his employment, and the last two acts are entirely his. (See H. Crabb, Robinson's *Diary*, 1869, vol. i. p. 310.) Drake and Hallam held similar views.

In a very remarkable essay, *Über Shakespeare's Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. iii, 1868, Delius treated the whole subject of the authorship of this play with his usual sobriety of judgment, and even more than his usual acumen. He pointed out that in the title-page of the 1609 quarto the play was termed 'the late and much admired'; that it directed special attention to the birth and life of 'Mariana'; and that it gave special typographical prominence to the name of Shakspere as the author. He dwelt at the same time on the fact of the obviously different authorship of the earlier and of the later portions of the play, and thought that unless this inequality were supposed to have been a patent fact at the time, no satisfactory explanation could be found of the exclusion of *Pericles*, popular as it unmistakeably had been upon the stage, from the First Folio.

Mr. Fleay, in his contribution *On the Play of Pericles* to the *Transactions of the New Shakspere Society*, 1874, shows, in the first instance, how strikingly metrical tests (and that of rimed lines in particular) confirm the conclusion that the last three acts of the play which treat the story of Marina (*minus* the prose scenes and the verses spoken by Gower as Chorus) stand quite apart from the rest, and may confidently be ascribed to Shakspere. This judgment, as was stated by Dr. Furnivall in the discussion following on the reading of Mr. Fleay's paper, coincided with the conviction of Tennyson 'that Shakspere wrote all the part relating to the birth and recovery of Marina, and the recovery of Thais.' But Mr. Fleay goes on to argue, I think very effectively, that the condition of the text favours the hypothesis that a draft play by Shakspere—such as that which Mr. Fleay prints under the title of *The Birth and Death of Marina, daughter of Pericles, Prince of Tyre*—was subsequently furbished up by other hands, rather than the supposition that he revised or elaborated an earlier complete or incomplete play; and that the former hypothesis which may very readily be allowed to suggest the companion supposition of 'Shakspere's disgust at the way in which his play had been completed,' most naturally accounts for its exclusion from the First Folio.

The remaining question is, who was the author—or who were the authors—of the non-Shaksperean portions of *Pericles*, in whatever relation they may stand as to priority of composition to Shakspere's own share in the work? The suggestion of Delius, that the author of this play was no other than George Wilkins, whose novel on the subject of *Pericles* appeared in the year previous to that in which the first quarto edition of the play was printed, has commended itself to very general acceptance. It is confirmed by Mr. R. Boyle, in his enquiry into Wilkins' share in *Pericles*, in *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1882. Of the life of Wilkins nothing is known; but a tragedy by him which is extant, *The Miseries of Inforst Marriage* (1608), resembles *Timon* and *Pericles* in more than one respect. (It will be briefly noticed below.) He is also said to have co-operated with Day and William Rowley in *The Travels of the Three English Brothers, Sir Thomas, Sir Anthony, and Sir Robert Shirley* (printed 1607); and was the author of a pamphlet called (for he seems to have been as fond of 'triads' as Ulrich von Hutten) *Three Miseries of Barbary, &c.* The same George Wilkins in 1608 published a novel entitled *The Painfull Aduentures of Pericles, Prince of Tyre. Being the True History of Pericles as it was lately presented by the worthy and ancient Poet John Gower.* (For the use of the term 'presenter' cf. 'Rumour the Presenter' in the Folio of *Henry IV, Part II*, Induction.) This novel, to which the figure of Gower serves as a frontispiece, and which is introduced by a Preface begging the reader to receive the 'Historie' in the same manner as it was 'by the King's Maiesties Players excellently presented,' enumerates all the personages of the story after the fashion of a drama, and all bear precisely the same names as those in the play. Delius accordingly conjectured Wilkins to have composed the play of *Pericles* with the aid of Twine's novel and of the *Confessio Amantis*, and that it was his handiwork which Shakspere adapted for the use of the King's players, who performed it at the Globe in 1607 or 1608 under his, as the more attractive, name. The play became so popular that it was entered for printing in 1608 by one bookseller, and actually published by another from a mutilated and probably surreptitiously obtained copy in 1609. Wilkins, who had relinquished his rights of authorship in the play, is further supposed to have expanded it into a novel, in order that the 'poore infant of his braine,' as he calls the book in the dedication, might be associated with its real father.

(George Wilkins' novel 'founded upon Shakespeare's Play' was edited by Tycho Mommsen, with a Preface by the Editor, and an Introduction by J. P. Collier, Oldenburg, 1857.)

Mr. Fleay, who accepts the conjecture that George Wilkins was the author of the first two acts of *Pericles* as the play now stands, thinks it necessary to assume a third hand, other than either Shakspere's or Wilkins', in those portions of the last three acts which are in prose (passages in which one would certainly be glad to know Shakspere to have had no concern) or which are in rimed lines of three measures, as distinct from those in four measures throughout the play, spoken by Gower. He conjectures William Rowley, who as has been noted collaborated with George Wilkins in another play, to have been the third author who lengthened out the play in which the second author had incorporated Shakspere's *Marina*. This conjecture approves itself to Mr. R. Boyle in his paper cited above; and the theory of a threefold authorship seems to have been held by an earlier critic, Mr. Sidney Walker. Such a process would certainly have corresponded to the description which, in the *Ode* already cited, Ben Jonson applies to plays of the type of *Pericles:*

> 'Scraps out of every dish
> Thrown forth, and raked into the common tub,
> May keep up the Play-club.'

The play of *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, whatever may be the true history of its composition, was beyond doubt in substance founded upon Laurence Twine's *Patterne of painefull Adventures: Containing the most excellent, pleasant and variable Historie of the strange accidents that befell unto Prince Apollonius, the Lady Lucina his wife, and Tharsia his daughter* (1607; reprinted by Collier in his *Shakespeare's Library*, vol. i). Twine's story is stated to have been merely a reprint of the English translation of the French version (by Robert Copland) of the story of Apollonius, which English translation had already been printed in 1510 by Wynkyn de Worde and reprinted in 1576 by William Howe. This story was originally written in Greek, about the fifth or sixth century of the Christian era, but it is not known by what author; and three Latin versions of it are mentioned, of which that followed by Twine appeared in the *Gesta Romanorum*. Godfrey of Viterbo, in the latter half of the twelfth century, told the tale in leonine verse in his *Pantheon*, whence it was adopted by Gower in his *Confessio Amantis*, completed before 1332, and three times printed before the reign of Elisabeth. The original author of *Pericles* was doubtless acquainted with Gower's poem, which suggested to him both the introduction of Gower as 'Chorus,' and the metre of the bulk of the passages spoken by him. But Gower is not the main source of the play, the action of which frequently diverges from his narrative. The romance of *Apollonius of Tyre* was extremely popular in the Middle Ages; an imperfect Anglo-Saxon and a Swedish version of it exist, as well as several German; and the German popular book on the subject agrees with that which was re-edited by Laurence Twine.

The name of 'Pericles' was probably taken from Sidney's *Arcadia.* That the form 'Pyrocles,' in which the name there occurs, was the form originally used in the play is rendered probable by the title of an epigram by Richard Flecknoe (1670), *On the Play of the Life of Pyrocles.*

For a full discussion of the 'emblem-book' reference in a passage of this play (act ii. sc. 2), see H. Green, *Shakespeare and the Emblem Writers* (1870), chap. v.

The play of *Pericles* was very successful on the stage, both before the Restoration and on its revival afterwards. The Prologue to Tailor's *The Hog hath lost his Pearl* (1613) concludes thus:

> 'And, if it prove so happy as to please,
> We'll say 'tis fortunate, like Pericles.'

After the Restoration, Pericles was considered one of Betterton's best parts. (See Genest, vol. iii. p. 566.) Lillo's adaptation, under the title of *Marina* (1738), was doubtless in part inspired by the vigorous morality of the old drama; but the revival of some of its dialogue was, to say the least, an act of singular obtuseness in a champion of good manners.

(32) ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA. III d. *Mal.* 30. E. 1608?

A Book called Antony and Cleopatra was entered on the Stationers' Register in the year 1608 by Edward Blount. As he was afterwards one of the joint publishers of the First Folio, this entry may with great probability be held to refer to Shakspere's play, which in that case may be concluded to have been acted shortly before. It is not, however, known to have been printed before the First Folio.

We are without any other clue to the date of this play. Malone has aptly compared with the lines in act iv. sc. 14,

> 'Sometime we see a cloud that's dragonish,'

a passage in Chapman's *Bussy d'Ambois* (printed 1607), act iii. sc. 1, and has pointed out a possible satirical allusion in Ben Jonson's *Epicoene* (acted 1609), act iv. sc. 2, to an attractive feature of *Antony and Cleopatra,* which has undoubtedly helped to sustain its far from assured vitality on the stage, as being 'nothing but fights at sea, drum, trumpet, and target.' Both these allusions suit the date of 1607–8, which is that generally assumed for the composition of this play. Metrical tests—especially those of light and weak endings—place it at a considerable distance from *Julius Caesar*, and in proximity to *Coriolanus*; moreover, had *Antony and Cleopatra* succeeded *Julius Caesar* within a brief interval of time, it is difficult to suppose but that Shakspere would have sought in some measure to harmonise his treatment of the character of Antony, and to prepare the growth of that of Octavius, so that the two plays might in point of fact have formed two *Parts* of a continuous whole.

The *Life of Antony* in North's version of Plutarch is, so far as is known, the solitary source of Shakspere's tragedy. As the late Archbishop Trench observes (*u. s.*, p. 56), the task of the dramatist was in this instance a different one from that imposed on him in *Julius Caesar*: 'the Brutus of Plutarch was a character ready made to' the poet's 'hands . . . but . . . the Antony of history, of Plutarch himself, would have been no subject for poetry.' T. Vatke (*Shakespeare's Antonius und Kleopatra und Plutarch's Biographie des Antonius*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. iii, 1868) has furnished an instructive analysis of the play from this point of view, and has pointed out with much force, how especially in the speeches of Cleopatra, after she has taken refuge in the Monument, the poetic feeling of Shakspere has caused him to diverge from the spirit of her conduct according to Plutarch's narrative. Yet to the very last he uses with marvellous tact the details of Plutarch, which possibly are so striking because derived from the *Memoirs* of Cleopatra's physician, Olympus. (Cf. Trench, *u. s.*, p. 58.) Perhaps the general assertion may seem warranted, that hardly any of Shakspere's plays is so richly jewelled with beauties of detail as this, and that none more signally illustrates the originality of its author's poetic style.

To previous plays on the subject Shakspere owed nothing. Jodelle's *Cléopâtre Captive*, famed as the earliest French tragedy, and acted before Henry II in 1552, opens with a soliloquy by the Shade of Antony. (See Ebert, *Entwicklungsgesch. d. franz. Tragödie*, pp. 101–113, for a description of this play.) Garnier's *Marc Antoine* followed in 1578, and after this a long series of *Cléopâtres*, down to Marmontel's in 1750, or I might say to MM. Sardou and Moreau's in our own days (1892). Samuel Daniel's *Cleopatra* (1594, apparently never acted) is a rhetorical play which takes its start from the death of Antony. (See a description of it below.) The Countess of Pembroke's *Tragedie of Antonie* (written in 1590 and printed in 1595) is a translation from the French of Garnier; while Samuel Brandon's *Virtuous Octavia* (1598), written in a similar style, attempts to shift the interest of the historical argument. (Cf. *ante,* vol. i. p. 436, *note.*) Beaumont and Fletcher's, or Fletcher and Massinger's, play of *The False One* (see below) treats of a different period in Cleopatra's history, that of her amour with Julius Caesar; but the *Prologue* seems to refer to Shakspere's play as one of those in which the names of Antony and Cleopatra had been 'nam'd with glory on the stage.' The late Mr. Massey's supposition that Cleopatra is modelled on Lady (Penelope) Rich (d. 1606), Sidney's Stella, the lady of the dark eyes, whom the late Mr. Massey and Mr. Henry Brown sought to identify with the 'black' lady of the *Sonnets,* may be balanced against the more seductive theory of Dr. Brandes that the inner movement of this play, and the figure of its beautiful and baneful heroine, reflect the passion of Shakspere's own life and his remembrance of a woman vainly loved—

> 'Mad in pursuit, and in possession so;
> Had, having, and in quest to have, extreme;
> A bliss in proof, and proved, a very woe.'

In any event Shakspere will stand excused for having, while drawing the woman Cleopatra in so masterly a way, failed to do more than touch in passing on her historical significance as a queen, and on the importance of her political designs. (See Adolf Stahr's interesting monograph *Cleopatra,* 1864, an attempt at rehabilitating her as a historical personage.)

Dryden's admirable *All for Love* (1678), which is an independent treatment of Shakspere's theme, not an adaptation of his tragedy, will be noticed below. In the previous year (1677) Sir Charles Sedley had produced an *Antony and Cleopatra,* of which he might claim at least diction and versification as wholly his own; Henry Brooke's play of the same name (printed 1778) is described by Genest (vol. vi. p. 63) as containing considerable additions to Shakspere, well written, but in the case of the new characters not happily conceived. —The earliest dramatic work of the German, Daniel Caspar von Lohenstein, notorious for the union in his writings of bombast and licentiousness, was a tragedy called *Cleopatra* (1661).

(33) CORIOLANUS. III e. *Mal.* 32.

A general agreement may be assumed among students of Shakspere that in *Coriolanus* we have a work of the poet's maturest period, even if the assent of all may not be commanded by the conclusion at which H. Viehoff (*Shakespeare's Coriolan*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. iv. 1869) arrives, that as to perfection in every point of artistic composition, no other of Shakspere's plays can be ranked above *Coriolanus*, and hardly any beside it. Nor is it necessary to subscribe to Ulrici's view, as summarised by the same essayist, according to which '*Coriolanus* forms the first play of a historical tetralogy, presenting the history of the political growth of the Roman people in its most important phases. *Coriolanus* brings before us the conflict between the Patricians and the Plebeians and the growth of the Republic; *Caesar*, the last futile efforts of that Republic, when dying, against the newly-arising monarchical form of polity; *Antony and Cleopatra*, the fall of the oligarchy and the characteristic features of the imperial government; finally, *Titus Andronicus*, the irresistible decay of the spirit of antiquity, and the situation of the Roman Empire in face of the Germanic people pouring into it as a new element of life.'

Malone dates *Coriolanus* 1610, and perhaps this, or a slightly earlier, date may be considered as near the mark as it is possible to approach. Halliwell-Phillipps' suggestion that among the editions of North's *Plutarch* Shakspere used that of 1612, rather than any of those earlier in date, rests on a basis too slight to admit of its being treated seriously. (The edition uses the form *unfortunate*, while the three earlier editions use the form *unfortunately*, in the passage corresponding to the line in act v. sc. 3:—

> 'How more unfortunate than all living women.'

See Furnivall, *Mr. Halliwell's Hint on the Date of Coriolanus, and possibly other Roman Plays* in *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1874). In any case the style and versification belong to a late period in Shakspere's literary developement, while the source of the play is a work which lay open to him at any time during his career as a dramatist. Sir Thomas North's translation of Amyot's *Plutarch's Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*, of which an admirable edition has been recently published, with an Introduction. by Mr. George Wyndham, first appeared in 1559, and was reissued in 1595 and 1603—and again, as has been seen, in 1612. (Halliwell-Phillipps desiderated a comparison of these editions for the purpose of determining which of them was used by Shakspere in his several plays.) The late Archbishop Trench, in his *Four Lectures on Plutarch*, after dwelling (pp. 49 *seqq.*) on the peculiar relations of Shakspere to Plutarch as a source—relations wholly different in their degree of intimacy from those *e.g.* in which he stands towards the Italian moralists—describes it as hardly an exaggeration to say that the whole play of *Coriolanus* is to be found in Plutarch. The statement, while in a sense correct, may perhaps be appropriately modified by the observation of Delius (in an admirably conceived essay, *Shakespeare's Coriolanus in seinem Verhältniss zum Coriolanus des Plutarch*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xi, 1876), that even in this instance, in order to create a real drama, Shakspere had to create everything anew—*scenarium* (division and arrangement of acts and scenes), characterisation, and diction.

The above all but exhausts what needs to be said concerning the sources of *Coriolanus*. Some of the expressions, and more especially the turn given to the conclusion of the apologue addressed to the people by Menenius (act i. sc. 1)—Delius, by the way, points out that in Plutarch Menenius makes his appearance on this occasion only, while in Shakspere he fills an important position in the play as a whole—were thought by Malone to have been suggested by a version of the same fable in Camden's *Remains*, published in 1605; and although in the substance of the passage Shakspere followed Plutarch, I am inclined to think (notwithstanding Delius) that Malone has made good his point. Staunton quotes Douce to the effect that Camden derived his version of the fable from John of Salisbury, who professed to have received it from Pope Adrian IV. The apologue is of course also to be found in Livy, bk. ii. c. 32. It suggested to Milton his more forcible than pleasing fable of the Wen, which he introduces with the phrase 'Menenius Agrippa speed us.' (*Of Reformation in England.*)

The theme of *Coriolanus* was treated by Calderon in a play, which, according to Ticknor, *History of Spanish Literature*, vol. ii. p. 374, *note*, defies classification as to species, called the *Armas de la Hermosura*. It certainly shows a fine contempt for the mere facts of history—though in the present instance they may not have been facts after all.

(34) CYMBELINE. IV b. *Mal.* 31. A. 1610–11?

Cymbeline is not known to have been printed before its appearance in the First Folio. The text of this impression has been carefully collated with those of the later folios in Mr. W. J. Craig's edition of *The Tragedie of Cymbeline, reprinted from the First Folio,* for the New Shakspere Society, 1883. *The Booke of Plaies and Notes therof* [of their?] *performans,* by Simon Forman, gives an account of 'the storri of Cymbalin, King of England,' as one of the plays seen by its author (see the reprint in *New Shakspere Society's Transactions,* 1875, Appendix II; cf. *ante,* p. 170). Unluckily Simon Forman omits the date of this particular performance; but as his notes refer to 1610 and 1611, it may fairly be held to have fallen within one of those years. The general style of the play is assuredly that of the latest period of Shakspere's dramatic productivity; and the tests of versification generally indicate the same conclusion, although the rime-test, if rigidly applied, would no doubt to some extent interfere with it. The episode in rimed verse introduced act v. sc. 4, was however no doubt inserted, like the masque in act iv. of *The Tempest,* in accordance with the taste or fashion of the times; its manner, which recalls that of the verses prefixed to several cantos of *The Faerie Queene,* seems to me to furnish no reason for impugning Shakspere's authorship of it. The rimes in the dialogue of act iv. sc. 2—one of the most beautiful scenes in this or indeed in any of Shakspere's plays—are more difficult to account for in a late work. Possibly, the scene may have been written at an earlier date than the rest of the last three acts—the portion of the play founded on Holinshed which Mr. Fleay supposes to have been written at an earlier date than that which precedes it. More probably, the lyric tone of this scene may have consciously or unconsciously influenced the poet; but in truth the difficulty can hardly be regarded as one of an insuperable sort.—I prefer not to enter into speculations with regard to the significance of the *Cymbeline* story as connecting itself with Shakspere's own biography.

From Holinshed (indirectly from Geoffrey of Monmouth) Shakspere derived the names of Cymbeline and of his two sons, as well as some historical facts concerning the king. But the story of the stealing of the two princes and of their residence in the wilderness appears to be his own invention.

The story of Imogen, which the poet has so skilfully interwoven with that of the sons of Cymbeline, was taken—probably indirectly—from Boccaccio, in whose *Decamerone* the history of Ginevra forms the Ninth Novel of the Second Day. For some extremely striking details which Shakspere has in common with Boccaccio are not to be found in the version of the story in a tale occurring in a tract called *Westward for Smelts* (stated by Steevens and Malone to have been published as early as 1603; but no edition exists of an earlier date than 1620; the tale is reprinted in Collier's *Shakespeare's Library*, vol. ii). An English translation of the Italian novel was therefore very probably in existence.

Boccaccio's novel is thought by Simrock to have been derived from a Latin original, which also gave rise to a popular German version of the story. Some points of the story of Imogen are reproduced in various other legends; the wager in Livy's narrative concerning Lucretia (bk. i. c. 57) is however essentially different (and it must be allowed, more natural in conception). The Spanish dramatist Lope de Rueda in his *Eufemia* is thought by Klein (vol. ix. p. 153) to have derived the wager-plot, which resembles part of that of *Cymbeline*, from a popular ballad. (Cf. Ticknor, *History of Spanish Literature*, vol. ii. p. 49.) The device of the chest, again, is known to Western as well as to Eastern story. It is more curious that the later adventures of Imogen—her seeking refuge in the wilderness and her death-like sleep—which Shakspere found in none of his known sources, should occur in the lovely fairy-tale of *Schneewittchen*. (This is pointed out by K. Schenkl; cf. Simrock, i. 274.) Coincidences between the story of *Cymbeline* and that of the old play of *The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune* (printed 1589) were pointed out in *Notes and Queries*, November 19, 1887. According to C. Louandre, *Chefs-d'œuvre des Conteurs Français avant La Fontaine*, Introd., p. xv, the old French romance of *Le Roi Flore et la Belle Jeanne* contains the type of *Cymbeline*. Delius has pointed out the coincidence, which as he says may be fortuitous, between one or two touches in act i. and the French *Un Miracle de Nostre Dame*.

The lovely name of Imogen occurs in Holinshed and Geoffrey of Monmouth, not however in the account of Cymbeline, but in that of Brutus and Locrine. (It occurs in the play of *Locrine*, act i. sc. 1.) Shakspere appears to have at one time to have intended to use it in *Much Ado about Nothing*, where a stage-direction in the First Folio, act i. sc. 1, opens with '*Enter Leonato* with Innogen (Imogen?) his wife.' (Stokes, p. 150, where see also as to the use of the name Leonatus in Sidney's *Arcadia*.)

With the song 'Hark! hark! the lark,' &c. (act ii. sc. 3) compare *Sonnet* xxix.

(35) THE WINTER'S TALE. IV b. *Mal.* 34.

Simon Forman (cf. *ante*, p. 190) saw this play acted at the Globe on May 15, 1611. We are without any other external evidence as to the date of its original composition; that it stands last among the comedies in the First Folio cannot be held to prove much, since *The Tempest* stands first in the same list. The tests of versification, as well as the general evidence of style and manner, however, prove that these plays stand close together; as a matter of fact the rime-test places *The Winter's Tale* last in the list of Shakspere's plays, since it contains no rimed five-measure lines at all.

The source of the play is Greene's novel of *Pandosto, the Triumph of Time*, first published in 1588, and reprinted in later editions under the title of *Dorastus and Fawnia*, which, as referring to the subsidiary plot of the story, had in the first edition only occupied a secondary place. (It will be found in vol. iv of Collier's *Shakespeare's Library*.) From the narrative of this novel, which is in the Euphuistic style, Shakspere diverges in but one point of importance, viz. that in the play Hermione survives, whereas the Bellaria of the novel has actually died. But, as Delius has well shown in his essay on *Greene's Pandosto und Shakespeare's Winter's Tale*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xv, 1880, the action of Shakspere's play differs from Greene's narrative in many points besides the names of the characters; and the omissions (as in the case of the king's passion for Fawnia) and substitutions (as *e.g.* that of the Young Shepherd for the foster-mother of Perdita's original) are alike illustrative of the intuition of the dramatist. Indeed, Delius has with a certain cruelty of insistance demonstrated that wherever Greene furnished a dramatic hint, it was rejected by Shakspere.—Possibly, Shakspere found elsewhere—perhaps even in an occasional reminiscence of his own earlier work—hints for particular features in the action of *The Winter's Tale*. Mr. W. C. Hazlitt holds that it was partly suggested by Gascoigne and Kinwelmarsh's joint version of the *Phoenissae*; (cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 209); but I am at a loss to know to what he can refer, except to Iocasta's account in act i. sc. 1 of the exposure and preservation of Oedipus. Professor Koeppel, *Zur Quellenkunde des Stuart-Dramas*, in *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen*, vol. xcvii, 1896, recognises a prototype of the statue of Hermione in Ferdinand taking the place of his 'resemblance cut in stone' in *The Trial of Chivalry*, printed 1605 (Bullen's *Old English Plays*, vol. iii. 1884). Simrock compares the rediscovery of Lucina in *Pericles*, and the return into the light of day of Hero in *Much Ado about Nothing*. Some of the characters, especially Paulina and Autolycus, were, in any event, of Shakspere's own invention. The name of Autolycus is borrowed from Greek mythology, where Autolycus is a son of Hermes; but it is difficult to understand how Warburton came to think the whole of the first speech of Autolycus (act iv. sc. 2) to be taken from Lucian's (?) treatise on *Astrology*. Shakspere probably derived the name from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (xi. 311 *seqq.*), as known to him through Golding's *Translation* (1575). There seems to be a reference to Ovid in the passage concerning Proserpina (act iv. sc. 2).

The charming title of the play, which, as Delius points out, so happily evades the difficulty of which Greene seems to have been conscious, may have been suggested to Shakspere by that of *A Winter Night's Vision*, an addition to the *Mirror for Magistrates* published by Niccols in 1610. But the term 'a winter's tale' was familiarly used to express a wonderful story suitable to be told over the fire on winter nights (' So I am content to drive away the time with an old wives' winter's tale'; Peele's *Old Wives' Tale*. Cf. also the use of the same phrase in Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*, act ii. sc. 1, and in *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, act iii. sc. 3).

The similarity between Autolycus' song (act iv. sc. 3) and that of Friar Tuck and Jenny in the *Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington* (act iii. sc. 1) by Anthony Munday (1598) has been already pointed out (*ante*, vol. i. p. 434 *note*). The lines sung by Autolycus (act iv. sc. 2), 'Jog on, jog on,' form part of a song reprinted in a collection called *An Antidote against Melancholy* (1661); the refrain had been set to music by John Hilton, and so published in *The Dancing Master*, 1650.

Klein (vol. x. p. 494) compares for the plot Lope de Vega's comedy, *El mármol de Felisardo*. Coleridge's *Zapolya* (1817), presented by him to his readers 'as a Christmas tale,' is confessedly an imitation of *The Winter's Tale*, with the plot of which elements of that of *Cymbeline* are happily interwoven.

It is unnecessary to dwell on the absurd pedantry of Hanmer's emendation of 'Bithynia' for 'Bohemia' as the scene of part of this play. Not only is the emendation as such wholly unwarranted—already Ben Jonson (see *Conversations with Drummond*) twitted Shakspere with the 'shipwrack in Bohemia'—but it is to be found in Greene's novel. In a letter to *The Academy*, Nov. 6, 1875, M. S. Kozmian suggested the possibility that the historical episode concerning Zicomovit III, Prince of Moravia, and his consort was the origin of the 'exposition and preservation' incidents in *The Winter's Tale*. The Bithynian conjecture induced the late Mr. Charles Kean, in his production of *The Winter's Tale* (1856), to plunge into a variety of antiquarian details derived from monuments in Asia Minor; and I believe he has been followed in later 'revivals.'

(36) THE TEMPEST. IV a. *Mal.* 35.

The genuineness of the entry in the *Account of the Revels at Court*, which states *The Tempest* to have been acted before James I by the king's players at Whitehall, in 1611, is now so generally disallowed that it may be passed by without further remark. The statement, derived from an extract from the *Accounts of Lord Harrington*, Treasurer of the Chamber to King James I, in the *Vertue MSS.* that *The Tempest* was one of a series of plays (thirteen in number) performed at Court on the occasion of the marriage of the Princess Elisabeth to the Elector Palatine proves nothing as to the date of the first performance of the play; unless, which is intrinsically improbable, its purpose (unlike that of the remaining plays in the list) should have been to furnish an allegorical parallel to Court personages and incidents. (Even Carrière's supposition that the masque in act iv. sc. 1 was in 1613 introduced into the play, composed as a whole at an earlier date, is an unsupported conjecture.) No weight whatever can of course be attached to the pleasing interpretation of Prospero's words in the last scene of the play—

> 'And thence retire me to my Milan, where
> Every third thought shall be my grave'—

as alluding to the poet's own intention of retiring to Stratford.

The internal evidence which can be brought to bear upon the question of the date of the composition of *The Tempest* is in point of fact, except in so far as it turns on style and versification, inextricably mixed up with the question as to the sources of the drama. We know of no impression of it before the First Folio, where, as is well known, it occupies the first place, a circumstance on the significance of which it would be hazardous to speculate. Style and versification place it very near *The Winter's Tale*, and quite unmistakeably at the very close of Shakspere's literary activity; nor can I think the supposition of Carrière intrinsically fanciful, that Shakspere bade farewell to his labours for the stage with a work in which no dissonance is left unresolved. (In this general connexion, as well as for its special suggestions as to the masque referred to above, see C. C. Hense's interesting essay, *Das Antike in Shakespeare's Drama: Der Sturm*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xv, 1880.)

It is quite impossible to attempt within my present limits a summary of all the learning which has been expended upon endeavours to identify the sources of *The Tempest.* (See H. Howard Furness, *New Variorum* edition of *The Tempest*, 1892; and in particular J. Meissner's *Untersuchungen über Shakespeare's Sturm*, 1872, of which a well-written popular summary appeared in *The Cornhill Magazine*, for October, 1872.)

To begin with, already Tieck adverted to the resemblance between *The Tempest* and the German play, the *Comedia von der schönen Sidea*, by Jacob Ayrer (reprinted in Cohn, *u. s.*, pp. 4 *seqq.*; cf. p. lxviii; and translated by Furness, *u. s.*). The action of Ayrer's play, though its human personages are Lithuanian and Polish princes and princesses, is purely fictitious; but there is evidence that he had either a legend or play before him, as he makes casual reference to 'the quarrelsome Duke Leopold,' who does not appear in the play itself. The resemblance between *The Tempest* and *The Fair Sidea* is by no means confined to the general course of the action; and the parallel passages are far too striking to admit of any other conclusion than that of the derivation of one of the two plays from the other, or of both from some common original. But the latter supposition it is difficult to accept, inasmuch as this common source must have furnished not only the main action, but even several of the comic incidents which have no integral connexion with it. Now, Jacob Ayrer died on March 26, 1605, so that, unless Shakspere is to be supposed to have written *The Tempest* before that date, Ayrer cannot have been the borrower. On the other hand, a special connexion between him and English comedians seems indicated as possible by the circumstance, noted by Cohn, that the album of Johannes Cellarius of Nürnberg, Ayrer's town, contains the autographs of two English actors under the respective dates of 1606 and 1604. English actors performed a *Sedea* 'in good German' in 1613. The conclusion seems inevitable that the outline of *The Tempest*, and some passages, were suggested to Shakspere by a knowledge, probably gained through English actors who had returned from Germany, of Ayrer's play.

A ballad called *The Enchanted Island*, discovered by Collier in a MS., apparently dates from the period of the Commonwealth. Its very title suggests a knowledge of Dryden's adaptation; its geography is more intelligible than Shakspere's; and it seems to contain reminiscences of Greene's *Alphonsus* in the names of the characters, which are not the same as Shakspere's, though he must of course have been acquainted with Greene's play. Indeed, the ballad is signed 'R. G.,' as if to claim Greene's authorship.

It is hardly necessary to dwell on the points of contact between *The Tempest* and *Pericles of Tyre* (striking as they are, especially if the theory (*ante*, p. 182) be accepted that of the latter Shakspere wrote only part, in which case he might have resumed ideas which in *Pericles* he had been unable to carry out), or on the resemblance of passages in *The Tempest* to passages of the *Orlando Furioso* (translated by Harington, 1591); viz. those referring to the shipwreck of Rogero, to the desert island inhabited by a hermit, and to the final reconciliation there between Rogero and Orlando (cantos xli and xliii).

Of far more significance are the several narratives of voyages and discoveries, belonging to this period of English history, which might have been used by Shakspere in the composition of his play. In 1577 Magellan's voyage to the South Pole was described in Eden's *Historye of Travaile in the West and East Indies.* Here occurs the description of an extraordinary and solitary giant, clad in skins and strangely painted, who approached the travellers dancing and singing, and pointed to the heavens to indicate the region whence the travellers had come. Others like him were afterwards discovered, who, when put in chains, called for aid on their great devil *Setebos.* The name of *Setebos* to whom Caliban appeals (act v. sc. 1) occurs in no other known authority.

A special importance attaches in the present connexion to the account, to which Malone first directed attention, of a voyage made in 1609, with the object of making discoveries on the coast of Virginia. As early as 1605 the Earl of Southampton helped to equip a vessel for this purpose; and in the expedition fitted out in 1608 by 'the Adventurers and Company of Virginia' the Earls of Southampton and Pembroke were interested together with other noblemen. It sailed in May, 1609, under the command of Sir George Somers, and in July his vessel, *The Sea-Adventure*, was driven ashore on the Bermudas. The crew were saved, but remained on one of the islands for some months, after which they continued their voyage to Virginia. Great anxiety was felt at home, till in 1610 some of the crew returned; and in 1610 an account of its *Discovery of the Bermudas, otherwise called the Isle of Divels*, was published in 1610 by Silvester Jourdain, who had been on board the *Sea-Adventure*. (The expedition was at a later date chronicled, with a mention of 'the dreadful coast of the Bermudas,' in Howe's supplement to Stowe's *Annals*.) The reference to 'the still-vex'd Bermoothes' in *The Tempest* (act i. sc. 2), as well as resemblances between the play and the narrative in the description of the storm, and in the circumstance of three sailors being left on the island, together with coincidences of details (such as Prospero's calling Caliban a tortoise, and tortoises being specially mentioned in all descriptions of the Bermudas), assuredly render it probable that Shakspere was acquainted with the narrative of this expedition, in which, on account of Southampton's connexion with it, if for no other reason, he must have taken a special interest. He appears to have made use of the *True Declaration of the Estate of the Colonie in Virginia*, published in 1610 'by the Councell'; but more especially to have taken many points and details of expression from *A True Repertory of the wracke and redemption of Sir Th. Gates, Knight; upon, and from the Islands of the Bermudas, &c.*, which is reprinted in Purchas' *Pilgrimes* (1625). The latter tract (and perhaps the *Declaration* likewise) was written by William Strachey, the 'secretary and recorder' of the 'Councell of Virginia,' which held its sittings in the colony itself, who in 1612 lived in London as an author in *Blackfriars*. This happy discovery, which Meissner was able to print as an appendix to his treatise, seems to me finally to set at rest the question as to the approximate date of the composition of *The Tempest*. ('A most dreadfull *Tempest*' is by the way the commencement of the heading of Strachey's chapter on the shipwreck and the Bermudas; which according to Meissner was used not by Shakspere only, but by Fletcher in his *Sea Voyage*.) Hunter, who thought the play written in 1596, attempted to fix the island of Lampedusa (S.W. of Malta) as the scene of the play.

These facts appear to me to tell almost irresistibly in favour of the date 1610–11 as that of the composition of *The Tempest*. The supposition of Hunter, that *The Tempest* was mentioned by Meres in 1598 under the name of *Love's Labour's Won* may be safely passed by. There is nothing in the play to point to an earlier date than 1610–11; unless it be the circumstance that Florio's English translation of Montaigne, referred to below, was published in 1603. But the remembrance of such a book, especially if it was actually in Shakspere's possession, was unlikely to die out within a few years. On the other hand, an elaborate attempt has been made by

Dr. R. Garnett, whose essay in *The Universal Review*, April 1889, is abstracted in Mr. Furness' *New Variorum* edition, to show that *The Tempest* was written for the wedding festivities of the Princess Elisabeth (1613), and that it has an allegorical significance bearing not only upon this event, but also upon the supposed character of King James, the lamented death of Henry Prince of Wales, and 'the promise' of his brother Charles. Apart from what seem to me the far greater probabilities in favour of the earlier date (1610–11), I should be slow to accept this ingenious theory, which is surely out of keeping with the methods of Shakspere's dramatic art, at all events in the season of its full maturity; and it is worth observing that none of the other plays in the series of which *The Tempest* formed part on the occasion in question could have been presented with any such allegorical intention. (Cf. Appendix B to Mr. A. W. Verity's Pitt Press edition of *The Tempest*, 1896.) It may however be noted that the date 1613 would agree with the supposition at one time advanced by Malone, that Shakspere chose the title of *The Tempest* in allusion to the great storm which, as is stated by Stowe, devastated the English coasts in the last month of the year 1612.

Various other sources (Ralegh and Hakluyt among them) have been suggested for incidental details in the action of *The Tempest*; but they must remain unnoticed here. The most peculiar feature of the play is its free imaginative use of the motive of the co-operation of superhuman machinery in human affairs. The belief in magic, which in the Reformation period had received so undeniably strong an impulse, was never stronger in England than under King James I, whose work on Daemonology had been published in the year of his accession to the English throne. If the King was not Prospero, the potency attributed to Prospero's charms was at least in harmony with the royal conceptions as to the conflict between derived powers of working good or ill. The literature of his reign readily responded to the fancies which in it were at large as to the hierarchies which control or thwart human action. To the conception of Ariel, a striking parallel has been found in the Satyr's description of his powers in Fletcher's *Faithful Shepherdess* (act v. sc. 5; the priority of date may of course be questioned, since Fletcher's play was written in or before 1611). The actual machinery requisite for the performance of Ariel's feat (act iii. sc. 3), and perhaps for the appearance of the goddesses in the masque (act iv. sc. 1), may have been invented by Inigo Jones. (Cf. Meissner, *u. s.*, p. 53.)

The conception of Caliban connects itself with the general idea of the desert island, to which it forms an all but inevitable supplement. But to the impressions derived from such accounts of desert places and their savage inhabitants as that cited above was added the influence of a literary tendency peculiarly characteristic of this age. Of Utopias, inhabited by beings free from the debasing effects of a false civilisation, the classical example in our literature was of course More's *De Optimo reipublicae statu deque nova* INSULA *Utopia*, published abroad in Latin in 1516, and in its first English translation in 1551. An Italian *Civitas solis*, written by Campanella in 1600, is likewise noted; and the production of this class of works, as is well known, long continued to be a favourite exercise of literary genius or ingenuity. But a more special literary panegyric of the blessings of an uncivilised state of society made its appearance in one of the Essays of Montaigne, published in 1588, and in an English translation published with much pomp of patronage and assistance by John Florio in 1603 (having been entered four years previously). Bk. I. ch. 30 of this translation prefixes the title *Of the Caniballes* to an encomium on the blessings enjoyed by nations 'neere their originall naturalitie.' 'Caliban' is indisputably a metathesis of Canibal (*i. e.* Caribee); and it seems difficult to escape from the conclusion, that Shakspere intended his monster as a satire incarnate on Montaigne's 'noble savage.' Moreover, Gonzalo's speeches (act ii. sc. 1) descriptive of the Utopia which he would found on the island are in part taken *verbatim* from this very chapter of Florio's translation. (As to Shakspere's supposed autograph in the copy of Florio's *Montaigne* in the British Museum, cf. *ante*, p. 2 *note*.) Elze has sought a reference to this in a passage in Ben Jonson's *Volpone* (iii. 2):

'Here's Pastor Fido—
. . . . . .
. . All our English writers,
I mean such as are happy in the Italian,
Will deign to steal out of this author, mainly:
Almost as much as from Montagnié.'

If this were an allusion to Shakspere, it would, as Elze shows, fix the date of *The Tempest* as early as 1607, when *Volpone* was produced. But it cannot be regarded as certain that the passage refers to Shakspere (whether to *The Tempest* or to *Hamlet*, cf. *ante*, pp. 160 and 162, or to both). On the other hand, the reference in another well-known passage in Ben Jonson, *Induction* to *Bartholomew*

Fair (1614) to the *desideratum* of 'a servant-monster' in the fair, and to 'those that beget tales, tempests, and such like drolleries' can hardly be dissociated from Caliban, or from the play of which he is a personage. The character of Caliban has found much honour in these latter days, when he has served as the hero of two metaphysical dramas, Robert Browning's *Caliban upon Setebos* (1864) and Renan's *Caliban* (1878), besides being recognised in scientific spheres as in conception the 'missing link' which the world of reality has not yet supplied to the adherents of the dogma of evolution. His mother Sycorax (such are the varieties of critical points of view) has been supposed to allegorise Queen Elisabeth.—The name of Trinculo (or Trincalo) occurs in Tomkis' *Albumazar*, performed before King James at Cambridge in 1614, but possibly written at an earlier date.

There is a striking resemblance between Prospero's famous lines—the most tragic 'farewell to the stage' ever conceived or expressed—in act iv. sc. 1 and two fine stanzas in Lord Sterline's *Tragedie of Darius* (written 1603 or *ante*). But though Shakspere may have seen the published *Darius*, it is by no means necessary to suppose him to have remembered the passage in question. Some very striking suggestions as to the indebtedness of *The Tempest* (and more especially of the masque in act iv. sc. 1) to classical sources have been made by C. C. Hense in his article, *Das Antike in Shakespeare's Drama: Der Sturm*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xv, 1880. Staunton and Delius had previously noted the use of a passage in the *Metamorphoses*, Bk. vii, translated by Golding, 1567, for Prospero's speech in act v. sc. 1 ('Ye elves of hills,' &c.).

The Tempest suggested *The Sea Voyage* of Fletcher (1622) and *The Goblins* of Suckling. As has been already noted (*ante*, vol. i. p. 513, and *note*), it was subjected to a treatment not exceeded in license by any other dramatic 'reproduction' by Dryden, working on a suggestion of D'Avenant's (1669), who in his poem of *Gondibert* (1651) plagiarised characters and situations from *The Tempest* on his own account. Their best excuse seems to me to lie in the fact that in this play, one of the most perfect of Shakspere's poetic creations, an element of operatic, as distinct from purely dramatic, effect is undeniably to be detected. (Waldron, who continued Ben Jonson's *Sad Shepherd*, is stated to have produced in 1796 a second part to *The Tempest*, under the title of *The Virgin Queen*. A copy of this is in the Dyce Library.)

On the other hand, *The Tempest* fed the imagination of Milton (see

Comus, 205 *seqq.*; 265 *seqq.*), who in the spring-tide of his powers thus came into contact with the 'August' of Shakspere's poetic genius.

(37) HENRY VIII. IV b. *Mal.* 23. A. 1613. †

The date of this play depends on the view taken as to its identity with a *Henry VIII* or *All is True*, performed as a new play on a particular occasion. This view has to be formed on certain pieces of contemporary evidence.

The statement of Edward Howes in his continuation of Stowe as to the burning of the Globe theatre on June 29, 1613, when the house was 'filled with people to behold the play, viz. of *Henry the Eight*,' is corroborated by several contemporary letters. One of these, from Thomas Lorkin to Sir Thomas Puckering, bearing date June 30, 1613, relates that 'no longer since than yesterday, while Burbage his companie were acting at the Globe the play of Henry VIII, and there shooting of certeyne chambers in way of triumph, the fire catch'd.' A similar account is given in a letter from John Chamberlain to Sir Ralph Winwood, dated July 8, 1613. And, which is of most importance, in a letter from Sir Henry Wotton to his nephew Sir Edward Bacon, dated July 2, 1613 (see *Letters of Sir Henry Wotton to Sir Edward Bacon*, 1661, pp. 30 *seqq.*, and *Reliquiae Wottonianae*), containing a more circumstantial narrative of the occurrence, the play is described as 'a *new* play, called *All is True*, representing some principal pieces of the reign of Henry VIII, which was set forth with many extraordinary circumstances of pomp and majesty, even to the matting of the stage; the Knights of the Order, with their Georges and Garter, the guards with their embroidered coats and the like; sufficient, in truth, within a while to make greatness very familiar, if not ridiculous.' The origin of the catastrophe is here also ascribed to the shooting off of 'certain chambers at the entry' of King Henry VIII to the masque at the house of Cardinal Wolsey in York Place. (In act i. sc. 4 the stage-direction actually is 'Drum and trumpet: chambers discharged.') 'Some of the paper,' the account continues, 'or other stuff wherewith one of them was stopped, did light on the thatch, where being thought at first but an idle smoke, and their eyes more attentive to the show, it kindled inwardly, and ran round like a train, consuming within less than an hour the whole house to the very grounds. This was the fatal period of that virtuous fabric; wherein yet nothing did perish, but wood and straw, and a few forsaken cloaks; only one man had his breeches set on Fire, that would perhaps have broiled him, if he had not by the benefit of a provident wit put it out with bottle Ale.' The calamity which called forth this not very dignified manifestation of the element of Puritan bitterness in Wotton's curiously composite nature, was also commemorated in a contemporary ballad or 'sonnett upon the pittifull burneing of the Globe Play-House in London,' the burden of which, as Collier (vol. i. p. 371) points out, seems to have reference to the title of the play mentioned by Wotton:—

> 'Oh sorrow, pittifull sorrow, and *yet all this is true.*'

The only other known play which might possibly be referred to is Samuel Rowley's *When you see me you know me*, which treats of events of Henry VIII's reign from the death of Queen Jane (Seymour), and which bore the second title of *The Famous Chronicle Historie of King Henry VIII.* It had been printed in 1605, and was reprinted in 1613, doubtless on account of the popularity of Shakspere's play; but it could hardly have had a treble title. Unless, therefore, a third play of which we know nothing was acted on this occasion, *All is True* must be identified with Shakspere's *Henry VIII*, the *Prologue* of which clearly and repeatedly alludes to the former title. Whether *The Enterlude of King Henry VIII*, referred to in a memorandum in the Stationers' Register, 1605, be Shakspere's play, or Rowley's, or yet another, there seems no evidence to show; but the second supposition seems the most probable. (Some rather confusing entries in Henslowe's *Diary* show that Chettle's *Cardinal Wolsey*, and *The Rising of Cardinal Wolsey* by Chettle, Munday, Drayton, and Wentworth Smith, which appears to have been introductory to the other, but written after it, were on the stage in 1601 and 1602.)

The question however remains, whether the play performed on the fatal 29th of June was actually a new play, or merely one written (and perhaps produced) at an earlier date and now reproduced with alterations. The internal evidence on this point is of two kinds.

The play as we have it contains references to Queen Elisabeth, *viz.* the passage in act iii. sc. 2 ('I persuade me,' &c.), and the famous lines, also *ex post facto* prophetic, spoken by Cranmer at the end of the last act. On the other hand it also contains, following the second of these passages, an equally complimentary passage in reference to King James. The two former passages might of course have been written in Elisabeth's lifetime, and the last added on the reproduction of the piece in the new reign.

For my part, I confess to grave doubts whether Queen Elisabeth would have relished—I will not say the epithet '*aged* princess' applied to her by Cranmer (act v. sc. 4), for this may have been a later alteration, but—the entire picture of her father's and mother's love-making, and the contrast in which it stands to the treatment of the character of Katharine, who is in truth the heroine of the play. (And a heroine of no ordinary attractiveness; Mrs. Siddons preferred this as 'the most natural of all Shakspere's characters,' and Johnson approved her choice. See Boswell's *Life of Johnson.*) Nor, on the other hand, can I believe that Queen Elisabeth would have permitted herself to be brought on the stage as an infant in swaddling-clothes. There is much force in the observation of Delius, that neither the relation of Shakspere to the Queen nor the use which he was in the habit of making of his opportunities as a dramatist are known to have been such, as to allow us to suppose that he would have chosen to combine the homage of splendid praise with the perfect freedom of historical criticism. In opposition to the opinion of most English critics (beginning with Malone, who says '*Henry VIII* was written, I believe, in 1601'), I strongly incline to the conclusion that *Henry VIII* or *All is True* was written *after* and not *before* the death of the Queen, *i. e.* between 1603 and 1613. This conclusion seems to be strengthened by the fact, which so far as I know was first noticed by the late Mr. Gerald Massey in his book on *The Sonnets of Shakspere*, that the last words of Essex on the scaffold are with great fulness of detail worked up in Buckingham's speech on his way to execution (act ii. sc. 1). It is hardly conceivable that Shakspere should have permitted himself, or should have been permitted, to seek sympathy by such an appeal on behalf of Essex during the two years which intervened between his catastrophe and the Queen's death.—There seems no necessity for pausing over the ingenious conjecture of K. Elze, advanced in his essay *Zu Heinrich VIII*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. ix, 1874, that the play was designed to be performed on April 12, 1603, as the seventieth anniversary of the wedding of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, but that its production was postponed on account of the death of Queen Elisabeth, although it may have been intended to print it. While this is not more than a fancy, Elze was assuredly right in rejecting the equally baseless supposition of Spedding, which was also favoured by Ulrici, that *Henry VIII* was produced in honour of the marriage of the Princess Elisabeth in 1613. If so, it would assuredly have been mentioned with the other plays in the *Vertue MS*.

On the whole, notwithstanding the contrary opinion of a succession of critics (beginning with Malone, who believed *Henry VIII* to have been written in 1601), I am strongly disposed to believe it to have been written after, and not before, the death of the Queen. If so, there is no reason against assuming that the play when produced in 1613 at the Globe was a new play, unless weight be attached to the objection of Mr. Fleay that the *Prologue* to *Henry VIII*, while alluding to the title *All is True*, describes the audience in terms ('the first and happiest hearers of the town') which suit the Blackfriars and not the Globe, and moreover states the entrance money paid to be a shilling, whereas at the Globe it was twopence. In the ballad on the burning of the Globe mentioned above, Mr. Fleay adds, we are told that 'riprobrates prayed for the fool,' and there is no fool in *Henry VIII*. (*Life of Shakespeare*, pp. 250–2.) I cannot, however, regard any of these objections as telling fatally against the supposition that the play performed at the Globe in 1613 and described, but without any pretension to technical accuracy, as a new play, was the *Henry VIII* of the First Folio. (Shirley's *The Doubtful Heir*, intended to have been produced at the Blackfriars, was actually produced at the Globe; in the *Prologue* it is described as unfit for the latter, because it contains 'no show, no dance.' The *Prologue* to *Henry VIII*, which as Gifford pointed out evidently treats the play as a novelty with which its public was wholly unacquainted, seems designed for a popular audience.)

The conclusion that *Henry VIII* is a product of the last years of Shakspere's literary activity is in every way justified by the character of its diction and versification, and more especially by its elliptical sentences, its condensed phraseology, its broken metre, and its remarkably numerous lines with a weak ending or running on into the next. But the application of these tests can hardly be considered apart from the theory, to be adverted to immediately, of a joint authorship with Shakspere in this play by one or more other writers.

The coincidences between Shakspere's and Samuel Rowley's plays, noted by Elze in his Introduction to his edition of the latter (1874), are of course equally explicable on the several hypotheses, that Rowley's drama was written before an early Shaksperean *Henry VIII*; that Rowley's was brought out in opposition to such a play; and that Shakspere's *Henry VIII* was written at a much later date. Elze seems on the whole to incline to the second of these hypotheses, while wholly opposed to the third.

The resemblances to Ben Jonson's style in portions of this play, but most notably in the *Prologue* and *Epilogue*, coupled with the assumption (for it is nothing more) that by 1613 Shakspere had ceased to write for the stage, led to the belief that Jonson was the author of the passages in question. This view was held very strongly by Schlegel, but may be dismissed together with other theories advanced by that critic on the subject of *Henry VIII.* Manifestly, the attention to pageantry which the play very consciously (see *Prologue*) exhibits, is chargeable not to the individual poet, but to the age which he set himself to please.

Of a very different importance is the contention in favour of a view which was first elaborated by the late Mr. Spedding, to whom it was first suggested by Tennyson. (Spedding's paper in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for August, 1850, was reprinted under the title of *The Several Shares of Shakspere and Fletcher in Henry VIII*, in the *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1874, Appendix, together with confirmations of his conclusions by the late Mr. Hickson, Mr. Fleay, and Dr. Furnivall. It has since received the general assent of Professors Dowden and Ingram, the late Mr. W. Bodham Donne, and the late Robert Browning; and 'intelligent concurrence' with it has come to be looked upon, by one of the least opinionated and most courteous of its supporters, as 'a necessity in the case of every well-qualified Shakspere scholar.' According to this view only a portion of the play was written by Shakspere, and the rest by Fletcher.

Mr. Spedding, then, examined *Henry VIII* from two points of view—first that of dramatic treatment and style, then from that of versification; and, from the latter at all events, his arguments must be allowed to be singularly striking. Undoubtedly, lines with the redundant syllable are far more numerous here than in any other Shaksperean play, and in the portions held to be attributable to Fletcher they are more than twice as numerous than in those thought assignable to Shakspere. (In a controversy with Mr. Swinburne, who declared in favour of Shakspere's authorship (in a relatively early period) of the play, Dr. Furnivall contended that the play also sufficiently illustrates the habit of triple terminations so dear to Fletcher.) Undoubtedly also, the number of 'unstopped' lines is remarkably great. If these phenomena could be regarded as merely extreme developements of tendencies which indisputably became stronger in Shakspere's versification with the progress of time, they would admit of explanation by the fact that this play (according to the view urged above) was one of the latest, if not the very latest, of Shakspere's dramatic works. Such an explanation, however, cannot in the present instance be held to be sufficient. On the other hand, I still venture to demur to the audacity of a criticism which regards it as impossible that Shakspere should have treated the whole subject with the lack of historical breadth and completeness to be charged against *Henry VIII*, and which thus puts forward Fletcher as a kind of scapegoat. 'Finding the original design' (as imagined by Mr. Spedding) 'not very suitable to the occasion and utterly beyond his capacity, he expanded the three acts into five, by interspersing scenes of show and magnificence, and passages of description, and long poetical conversations, in which his strength lay; dropped all allusion to the great ecclesiastical revolution which he could not manage and for which he had no materials supplied him; converted what should have been the middle into the end; and so turned out a splendid "historical masque or show-play," which was no doubt very popular then, as it has been ever since.' This sort of criticism calls for a vigilance which should never be more close than in the case of writers so full of resource as the late Mr. Spedding. When in act iv he does 'not so well know what to think,' and is struck by this part of the play as bearing 'evidence of a more vigorous hand than Fletcher's, with less mannerism,' while yet devoid of 'the freshness and originality of Shakspere,' he at once hints a way of escaping from the difficulty, *viz.* that possibly *Beaumont's* hand is to be here suspected.

Acting on this hint, or under the inspiration of the critical impulse which is never so strong as when dealing with material already proved incapable of resistance, more recent critics have gone a step or two further. Mr. R. Boyle (in his essay *Henry VIII: An Investigation into the Origin and Authorship of the Play* in *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1885) has demonstrated, with much acuteness of argument, that this play was written by Massinger and Fletcher. Even the character of Katharine, in which he appears to think some remembrance of Shakspere's dramatic matter traceable, is not it appears to be vindicated to him. Mr. Fleay, more judiciously it may seem, declares for a tripartite division of the play, leaving however to Shakspere not more than sc. 2 in the first, and scenes 3 and 4 in the second, acts.

It seems strange, as is observed by Delius (*Fletcher's angebliche Betheiligung an Shakespeare's King Henry VIII*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xiv, 1879), that the assignment of the play to Shakspere in the First Folio should have been left unchallenged by Fletcher—or, as we may now add, by Massinger, both of whom were alive at the time of its publication. But however this may be, and however odd it may further seem that a striking passage in Cranmer's famous speech (in the last scene of the play) should be ludicrously parodied in Fletcher's *The Beggars' Bush* (see Higgen's mock address, act ii. sc. 1)—the assumption of a co-operation on Fletcher's part in *Henry VIII*, as we possess it, may be regarded as removed beyond reasonable doubt. The measure of this co-operation on the other hand, which is by no means to be determined by metrical tests only, is still *sub judice*; while the attempt to exclude Shakspere from all share in the composition of this play can hardly as yet be said to have established its claim to a hearing.

Henry VIII is based upon the Chronicle of Holinshed, with perhaps an occasional use of that of Halle continued by Grafton. Cavendish's *Life of Wolsey* supplied Holinshed with a large part of the materials for his account of the Cardinal; Shakspere may have had access to this work, although it was not printed till 1641, and then in a garbled form. (See for an account of the book the Preface to Singer's editions of it, 1826 and 1856.) The tradition as to Wolsey having been the son of a butcher is not in Cavendish; but it is to be found both in Skelton's *Why come ye not to Courte?* and in his *Speke, Parrot*, as well as in Roy's satire *Rede me, and be not wrothe, &c.* The episode of the accusation and acquittal of Cranmer seems to have been taken by Shakspere—or was it by Fletcher, himself a bishop's son?—from Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, published in 1563. The transaction is related at length in Strype's *Memorials* of the Archbishop; but Froude (see *History of England*, 12mo edn., vol. iv. p. 5, *note*) was unable to discover any contemporary authority which would allow him to trust the details. The sequence of the events in *Henry VIII* is not in accordance with historical accuracy; and the dramatist or dramatists, while making no pretence of following their sources after the fashion of a Chronicle History, deal very freely with distances of time.

Thus, the play opens with a reference, as to an event not long past, to the Field of the Cloth of Gold (1520), which agrees in order of time with the main subject of the earlier part of the action, viz. the fall of Buckingham. (This, by the way, was the portion of the play which George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, who had bespoken the play in August, 1628, contented himself with witnessing, although it was remarked that 'he should rather have seen the fall of Cardinal Wolsey, who was a more lively type of himself.' See *Centurie of Prayse*, p. 169; and cf. *Fresh Allusions*, p. 101—both from contemporary letters.) But, contemporaneously with this is supposed to occur the reversal of the ordinance for taxing the nation (1526); and Cardinal Campeggio is made to arrive in England at the time of Buckingham's fall, whereas he actually came here eight years afterwards (1529). Similar inaccuracies, not perhaps altogether unintentional (since so much depends on dates in the history of this unpleasing episode), might probably be detected in the dramatic reproduction of the beginning and course of Henry's passion for Anne Boleyn. ('Nothing,' says Ticknor, *History of Spanish Literature*, vol. ii. p. 402, *note*, 'will show the difference between Shakespeare and Calderon more strikingly than a comparison between *Henry VIII* and Calderon's *Cisma de Inglaterra* 'on the fortune and fall of Anne Bullen and Cardinal Wolsey.') Lastly, the acquittal of Cranmer took place ten years later (1543) than the birth of Elisabeth, with which in the play it is made to coincide. (Most of the above licences were already pointed out by Hunter.) Mention may be made in addition of a notable confusion of persons between the Duke of Norfolk (act i. sc. 1) who was present at the Field of the Cloth of Gold, and who died in 1524, so that he was not living at the time of Wolsey's overthrow, and his son and successor who was lord deputy of Ireland, 1520–1522 (act iii. sc. 2). The Earl of Surrey of the year 1529 was the poet; so that the dramatist may be said to have rolled two Norfolks, and again two Surreys, into one.

The Prologue and Epilogue of this play deserve special notice, apart from the question of their authorship, as bearing upon contemporary stage history. The 'fellow in a long motley coat' in the Prologue is thought to allude to Will Summers the jester, who plays an important part in Samuel Rowley's *When You See Me, You Know Me* (cf. *ante*); but he might also refer to the Fool who (cf. *ante*, p. 204) was one of the fondest remembrances of the frequenters of the Globe theatre. Further allusions to Rowley's play are thought by Elze to be perceptible in other sarcasms of the Prologue: 'the noise of targets' and 'fool and *fight*,' as referring to the fight between the king in disguise and a highwayman, together with the indirect reproof supposed to be conveyed by the repeated assertion that here 'all is true' as in contrast with the comic scenes invented by Rowley. Finally, the reference in the Epilogue to the abuse of the City is thought by Elze to have been intended to recall the satirical representation of the City-guard and the Counter in the same earlier play; it should however be noted that *Henry VIII* itself contains an attack (act v. sc. 3)—of a rather left-handed sort it must be allowed—against the City 'youths, that thunder at a play-house, and fight for bitten apples, that no audience, but the Tribulation of Tower-Hill, or the Limbs of Limehouse, their dear brothers, are able to endure.'

Henry VIII—thanks to the coronation ceremony—was in 1727 (the year of the coronation of George II) represented forty times in succession; but it would be an error to suppose that the stage popularity of the play has been wholly, or even chiefly, due to the opportunities for pageantry which it designedly offers. The situation of the trial-scene—commemorated in one of the best-known of English theatrical portrait-pictures—is in some of its general features reproduced in the powerful first act of Grillparzer's historical tragedy of *König Ottokar's Glück und Ende* (1825).

'Doubtful' plays ascribed to Shakspere.

In addition to the plays in the above list, not a few others have been ascribed to Shakspere. In Camden's *Britannia* (ed. 1753, p. 606), where Shakspere's tomb in the chancel of Stratford-on-Avon church is mentioned, he is described as 'one who has given ample proof of his genius and great abilities, in the forty-eight Plays he has left behind him.' Nor, as will be seen, does this total cover the number of the plays of which at different times he has been held to have been either sole or part author.

'Doubtful' plays in the later Folios.

As has been already noted (*ante*, p. 180), *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, after being entered and printed with Shakspere's name in 1608 and 1609 respectively, was included in the second issue of the Third Folio (1664) and in the Fourth Folio (1685). Together with it, six other plays found a place there; but unlike *Pericles*, which has since reappeared in all editions of Shakspere, they were ordinarily excluded from the earlier editions, and their claim to be regarded as Shaksperean came to be generally ignored. Attention was, however, once more directed to them through their republication by Malone in his *Supplements* (1780). A. W. Schlegel entertained no doubt as to Shakspere's authorship of at least three of them, viz. *Cromwell*, *Oldcastle*, and *The Yorkshire Tragedy*; as to the remaining three, viz. *Locrine*, *The London Prodigal*, and *The Puritan*, he left the question more or less open. They were translated by Tieck, who had previously avowed his belief in their Shaksperean origin, from 1811 onwards; as well as by other German writers. Of *The London Prodigal*, as well as of extracts from *Cromwell* and *Oldcastle*, German translations by Eschenburg had appeared as early as 1782. It may be at once noticed that three of these plays, viz. *Oldcastle*, *The London Prodigal*, and *The Puritan*, were separately published in quarto with Shakspere's name, and the remaining three with his initials, attached during his lifetime. But the former circumstance has little or no weight in itself for determining the question of their authorship, since a bookseller's fraud is usually at least as probable an assumption as an act of piracy. And one of these plays has been brought home to its actual authors, viz. *The First Part of Sir John Oldcastle*, which has accordingly been noticed above as the joint production of Munday, Drayton, R. Wilson, and Hathwaye[1].

Other plays wholly or partially attributed to Shakspere.

In addition to the above, several other plays have in whole or in part been at various times attributed to Shakspere. Only two of these were ever published with his name (as joint author), viz. *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. as 'by Fletcher and W. Shakspeare' in 1634, and *The Birth of Merlin*, as 'by William Shakspeare and William Rowley' in 1662. Among the rest, *Arden of Feversham* (1592), *Edward III* (1596), *Mucedorus* (1598). and *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* (1608) were printed anonymously during Shakspere's lifetime; *Faire Em* probably not till after his death (before 1619). In addition to these, which together with the plays previously noticed as printed in the later Folios may fairly be described as making up the list of Pseudo-Shaksperean' or 'doubtful' plays proper, the following are to be mentioned in the present connexion. The very remarkable tragedy of *Sir Thomas More* (1590 *c.*) has been held on so high authority to exhibit a striking resemblance to the works of Shakspere's youth that I have reserved it for notice in the present chapter. On the other hand, it would seem idle to return to *The Arraignment of Paris*, printed anonymously in 1584, but now generally assigned to Peele[1]. It was attributed to Shakspere by Kirkman, on no perceptible grounds. *George-a-Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield* (acted 1593), was attributed by Tieck to Shakspere, who curiously enough is in a manuscript note in an old copy said to have himself testified to its authorship by 'a minister'—a statement held by some to be corroborative of its authorship by Robert Greene, to whom internal evidence points as its author[2]. The late Mr. R. Simpson thought Shakspere's hand traceable in *A Larum for London, or The Siege of Antwerp*, printed in 1602, but probably produced three or four years sooner[3]. Nothing better than an idle rumour assigned to Shakspere *The Lover's Melancholy*, by Ford, acted in 1628, and printed in the following year. A play, *The Prodigal Son*, which is preserved only in a German version printed in 1620, has been ascribed to Shakspere on the supposition that the burlesque interlude of *The Prodigal Child*, performed in act ii of *Histriomastix* (attributed to Marston, and written during the reign of Elisabeth), satirises this play, and what is more, that the poet Posthaste, who accompanies the players, is intended for Shakspere. Neither supposition is proved, and the latter seems untenable[4]. *Albumazar*, acted before King James I in 1615, and generally held to be by Thomas Tomkis, has also been ascribed to Shakspere; and some marginal notes on a copy of this play, supposed to be in Shakspere's hand, were laid before the Historical MSS. Commission in 1874[5]. *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*

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[1] See *ante*, vol. i. pp. 434-5.

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[1] Cf. *ante*, vol. i. pp. 366–7.

[2] Cf. *ante*, vol. i. pp. 403–5.

[3] See his edition of the play, 1872, which includes a reprint of George Gascoigne's narrative of *The Spoyle of Antwerp*, which was the source of the play.

[4] Cf. *ante*, pp. 146–7; and see below as to *Histriomastix*.

[5] See below as to *Albumazar*.

(licensed 1611) seems to have been attributed in succession to Thomas Goffe, Chapman, and Shakspere; modern critics have in their turn ascribed it to Massinger and to Cyril Tourneur[1]. *The Double Falsehood* was edited as Shakspere's by Theobald in 1728; but the supposition was generally rejected, and the play has since been thought assignable to Shirley, and to Massinger[2]. *A Warning for Faire Women*, printed in 1599 and acted by the Lord Chamberlain's company, a very striking example of a particular class of domestic drama—that which brought on the stage a 'popular' murder of more or less recent date—was ascribed to Shakspere, but, apart from the fact that the *Induction* appears to contain a satirical allusion to his *Richard III*, on no sufficient internal evidence[3]. Dekker's *Satiro-Mastix* and *Wily Beguiled* have been arbitrarily attributed to Shakspere. Lastly, if we leave out of account those old plays which have been noticed in their connexion as revised or re-written by Shakspere in *Henry VI*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Richard III*, *King John*, and *King Lear* (but which have or still are held by some to have themselves proceeded from his hand), we come to six plays that were entered as Shakspere's on the Stationers' Register, but have not been preserved to us. These are *The History of King Stephen* (entered 1660), probably a Chronicle History based on the *Gesta Stephani* or on one of the other early authorities for this reign[4]; *Duke Humphrey* (entered 1660), which treated of Humphrey Duke of Gloucester, one of the most interesting figures of his age, and a prominent personage in both the *First* and the *Second Parts* of *Henry VI*[1]; *Henry I* and *Henry II*[2] (entered 1653 as 'by Wm. Shakespeare and Robert Davenport'); *Iphis and Ianthe, or A Marriage without a Man*, entered 1600, the subject of which is entirely open to speculation, more especially since in Greek mythology, 'Iphis' occurs both as a man's and as a woman's name; and *The History of Cardenio,* entered as by 'Mr. Fletcher and Shakespeare' in 1653. The last of these plays, which has been thought identical with *The Double Falsehood*, was no doubt founded on the novel of Cervantes (*Las dos Doncellas*) which suggested the plot of Fletcher and Shirley's *Love's Pilgrimage*[3].

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[1] See below, note to Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Maid's Tragedy*.

[2] Cf. *ante*. vol. i. p. 528, *note*.

[3] Collier, however, says with regard to one scene of this play: 'Here we say, *Aut Shakespeare Aut diabolus*' ii. 441, *note* . The play was edited by the late Mr. R. Simpson. in vol. ii. of *The School of Shakspere*. Cf. Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. ii. p. 54. The full title is worth citing: '*A Warning for Faire Women, containing The most Tragicall and Lamentable Murther of Master George Sanders of London, Marchant, nigh Shooters Hill; consented unto by his owne wife, aided by M. Browne, Mistris Drewry, and Trusty Roger, agents therin.*' It was founded on the account in Stowe, and on a special narrative printed in 1573, and reprinted by Mr. Simpson; and there were probably ballads on the subject.

[4] The *Gesta Stephani* are written by an adherent of Stephen: but the best-known allusions to King Stephen in our later literature are satirical in intention.

Plays attributed to Shakspere on specious grounds.

Of the above-mentioned plays a selection only appears to call for separate notice, either as having been attributed in whole or in part to Shakspere on at least specious authority, or as possessing claims, of which the internal evidence cannot be lightly set aside, to association with his name. These may be most conveniently enumerated in their probable chronological order[4].

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[1] The title of the latter, as well of the *First Part of the Contention, &c.*, on which it was founded, made special mention of 'the death of the Good Duke Humfrey.' Cf. *ante*, p. 59. Ambrose Philips' *Humfrey Duke of Gloucester* (1723) is founded on *Part II* of *Henry VI*, which had previously been adapted by Crowne (1681). See Genest, vol. iii. pp. 102–4.

[2] I know of no English play on the subject of either of these reigns with the exception of Lord Tennyson's *Becket*. Theodor Körner's fine tragedy *Rosamunde* appeared in 1814. In the eighteenth century *Fair Rosamond* was a droll at *Bartholomew Fair* (Henry Morley, *Memoirs of Bartholomew Fair*, p. 333).

[3] Introduction to Dyce's *Works of Beaumont and Fletcher*, p. xliii (and cf. below), and Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. i. p. 194. Andreas Gryphius' *Cardenio und Celinde, oder Unglücklich Verliebete*, is included in the *First Part* of his *Deutsche Gedichte*, 1657; and the subject afterwards became a favourite theme of the German Romanticists.

[4] Several of these plays were edited by Delius in his *Pseudo-Shakspere'sche Dramen*, Elberfeld, 1854–1874; by Mr. W. C. Hazlitt in *The Supplementary Works of Shakespeare, comprising his Poems and doubtful Plays*, 1859; and by M. Moltke in *The Six Doubtful Plays of William Shakespeare*, Leipzig, 1869. Charles Knight in vol. ix of *The Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakspere* (1866), printed a series of commentaries on several of these plays, with extracts, and a full text of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. Special editions will be noticed in their place. A brief digest of the 'doubtful plays' by Baron G. von Vincke appeared in *Jahrbuch*, vol. viii. 1873;

Sir Thomas More (1590 *c.*).

The singularly interesting play of *Sir Thomas More*[1] stands in some respects apart from the rest. While there is no indication that this work, one of the most interesting of our early tragedies, was ascribed to Shakspere before our own day, the evidence in favour of the supposition is not internal only, but turns on the daring conjecture that a portion of this play is actually extant in Shakspere's handwriting. And this portion has been thought to be precisely that which in the words of an eminent critic, the late Mr. Spedding, who was strongly inclined to adopt the views first put forward by the late Mr. R. Simpson, 'bears a stronger resemblance to the acknowledged works of Shakespeare's youth than to those of any' known 'poet'[2]. On the question of the handwriting—which, of course, would belong to a much earlier date than that of any accepted autograph signature of the poet's[3]—I can offer no opinion; nor is it perceptible how any conclusion could be arrived at with any approach to certainty. But as to the style and manner of the passages in question, not only may the speeches of More, in particular that addressed to the insurgents, which may have been specially elaborated to suit the requirements of the licenser, be said without

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and a remarkably exhaustive discussion on them, by Professor R. Sachs, of which I have made free use, *ib.*, vol. xxvii. 1892. See also the late Mr. R. Simpson's paper, *On some Plays Attributed to Shakspere*, in *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1875-6; which, however, enters into a detailed examination of only two of their number; and his Introductions to the plays included in his *School of Shakspere*, 2 vols., 1878. The select edition contemplated by the *Deutsche Shakespeare-Gesellschaft* has not been accomplished; and Professor Sachs' above-mentioned essay appeared as a kind of substitute for it.

[1] Edited for the (Old) Shakespeare Society by Dyce, 1844.

[2] See the paper, *On a question concerning a supposed specimen of Shakespeare's handwriting*, reprinted from *Notes and Queries*, September 21, 1872, in Spedding's *Reviews and Discussions, &c., not relating to Bacon* (1879). The theory, that the third series of additions made to the extant MS. of the play (which was the official copy submitted by the Lord Chamberlain's players to Edmund Tylney as Master of the Revels), and not written in the same hand as two other series of additions and the body of the MS. itself, was in Shakspere's hand and consisted of the passages contributed by him to the play, was advocated by Mr. R. Simpson in a very able paper, *Are there any extant MSS. in Shakespeare's Handwriting?* in *Notes and Queries* for July 1, 1871.

[3] Cf. *ante*, p. 2.

hesitation to have the true Shaksperean manner besides being genuinely Shaksperean in feeling, but it is with difficulty they can be conceived to have been written by any other contemporary author. On the other hand, while the half-comic, half-pathetic scene with Fawkner might certainly have been written by Shakspere, I am not sure that the same supposition would not apply to much else of the prose in this play, including the excellent scenes in which Doll is a leading personage, and which are quite worthy of the hand that wrote the Jack Cade scenes in *Part II* of *Henry VI.* Mr. Fleay seems at different times to have conjectured Drayton and Lodge to have been the author of *Sir Thomas More*[1].

Apart from the question of authorship, this tragedy presents several features of interest. We may wonder that it should have been possible, at so early a date as 1590 or thereabouts, to treat in a dramatic form historical events closely connected with one of the most critical passages in the political action of the reign of Henry VIII. But the minds of men moved rapidly at the height of the Elisabethan age, and there is reason for believing that the licenser was far more apprehensive of allusions being traced in the play to difficulties of the present than susceptible concerning references contained in it to the past. Moreover, the writer has after a fashion surmounted the historical difficulties of his task by treating the downfall of More as a kind of heaven-sent calamity, arousing sympathy and pity for its object rather than demanding censure of the actions and motives of its immediate author. The contents of the 'articles' to which More and the Bishop of Rochester decline to subscribe are shrewdly left unmentioned. On the other hand, the rising against the foreigners has been thought either designedly or undesignedly to allude to the discontent provoked in the City by the same cause long after the 'ill May-day' of 1517 commemorated in the play[2].

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[1] *English Drama*, vol. i. p. 157 and vol. ii. p. 313.

[2] Mr. R. Simpson thought that the insurrection prepared by the apprentices in 1586, was in the minds of the writer and of the censor;

Yet, though in general, and more especially in its earlier scenes, following Hall's *Chronicle*, besides possibly alluding to the politics of its own age, and notwithstanding its old-fashioned quasi-epical construction, *Sir Thomas More* is a character-tragedy rather than a chronicle history or historic drama. Its hero first comes before us as the wise judge, the energetic politician, and the renowned scholar. He deals out equity at the expense of a Justice of the Peace; he suppresses a dangerous insurrection at the risk, but without the loss, of his popularity; he pleads eloquently and successfully for mercy towards the great body of the culprits; he holds sportive converse with 'the famous clarke of Rotterdam,' Erasmus.; and then, after assisting at the exhibition of a moral-play[1], sits high in Council of State. Here he declines to submit to the king's despotic demand; whereupon we are introduced to the house at 'Chelsey,' and to the domestic circle which Roper and Holbein have made so familiar to English hearts and minds. More's cheerfully philosophical bearing in face of his doom is very effectively depicted; and we then accompany him to the Tower and to the scaffold, whence he delivers his last shafts of irony, till it becomes time to forsake

'all mirthe; good reason, why:
The foole of fleshe must with her fraile life dye.'

'A very learned worthie gentleman scales errour with his blood,' says Justice Suresby, by way of a formal ending to the play. Taking into account the admirably true humour of the popular scenes which form the foliage of this dramatic portrait, the work must be allowed to defy comparison in the period of its production, and to depict in no unworthy fashion the most interesting figure in the history of the

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Mr. Fleay, who dates the play 1596, supposes the action to refer to the City riots of 1595.

[1] This performance, as 'a play within the play,' of portions of *Lusty Juventus* (cf. *ante*, vol. i. pp. 124–6), one of our old moralities, is very curious: the more so since the Prologue announces the morality as *The Mariage of Witt and Wisedome* (cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 135), to which it bears no resemblance. The same scene contains an interesting enumeration of popular moralities and interludes of the day.

English Renascence. Thus this tragedy, too, proves how a great age invariably brings with it a sense of freedom in treating of the problems of the past—whether more or less remote—which the greater problems solved or in course of solution by the age itself are already superseding.

Arden of Feversham (*pr.* 1592).

With the next of the 'doubtful' plays included in our list, we are transplanted into a very different atmosphere of dramatic inspiration. *Arden of Feversham*[1] was first printed, anonymously, in 1592; further editions followed in 1599 and 1633. A not unskilful adaptation of the play was put together by George Lillo, a dramatist well qualified to appreciate some of its characteristic excellences, in 1736, and revised or completed after his death by Dr. John Hoadley[2]. In 1770 an inhabitant of Faversham, Edward Jacob, reprinted the old play, with a preface wherein he attributed its authorship to Shakspere. Among later critics who have regarded this assumption as at least possible, are Tieck, Ulrici, and Charles Knight.

This play is a dramatic version of a horrible story, narrated by Holinshed, of the murder of a Kentish gentleman of the name of Arden or Arderne[3] by his wife, her paramour, and some ruffians in their pay; and it contains many local allusions, which have been elucidated by Mr. Donne[4]. The actual crime was perpetrated in 1551, in the reign of Edward VI. Holinshed's account, the statements in which appear to be in part borne out by official records[5], is followed with tolerable closeness in the drama. It is not a mere sketch like *The Yorkshire Tragedy*, but extends over five acts; even the delays mentioned as having occurred in the execution of the murderous design are faithfully reproduced, although hardly any dramatic motive for them is supplied. Indeed, the play, as a whole, is but a slovenly piece of work, and the characters carrying on its action are throughout either repulsive or uninteresting. There seems an intention to suggest in Arden's avarice a kind of poetic justification of his doom; but the hint is too slight to be of much effect. The character of the wife, hateful in itself, is invested with no adventitious charm or allurement; vice is painted as nakedly and blackly as it is by the chronicler. The personages of the hired ruffians are rather in Ben Jonson's style; but there is little humour to relieve the loathsomeness of the figures.

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[1] See Mr. A. H. Bullen's edition, from the text of 1592 collated with those of 1599 and 1603; and the reprint *ap.* Delius, *u. s.* Cf. also *An Essay on the Tragedy of Arden of Feversham*, by C. F. Donne, vicar of Faversham, 1873.

[2] It was produced in 1759, and again, in a reduced form, in 1790. (See Genest, vol. iv. p. 555; vol. vi. p. 602.)

[3] So spelt in an entry in the Register of the Privy Council referring to the murder. See Collier, vol. ii. p. 411, *note*.

[4] No weight need be attached to the circumstance that Leicester's players were at Faversham in 1590.

[5] The executions of the various agents in the murder are recorded, *s. d.* 1551, in Machyn's *Diary*, edited for the Camden Society by J. G. Nichols, 1848, together with the addition, made at a later date: 'and at Flushing was berayd Blake Tome for the sam deth of M. Arden.'

On the other hand, *Arden of Feversham* contains one or two passages which strongly resemble Shakspere in manner. Such are, more especially, Shakebag's speech as he is waiting to commit the fatal deed, and the foretelling (as it were) by Arden of his own doom in his narrative of a warning dream (act iii. scenes 2 and 3). The versification has been remarked upon by Charles Knight as exhibiting a freedom of movement reached by no other dramatist of the time except Shakspere; and Mr. C. F. Donne discerns 'a sort of dawn of Shakspere' in Mosbie's speech (act iii. sc. 5), the blank-verse of the passage seeming to him to resemble that of *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* (*vide infra*), while for the thought of the passage he compares *Macbeth*, act iii. sc. 4.

It seems hardly worth while to follow Jacob in applying the test of the parallel occurrence of merely conventional phrases in this and other plays of the same period. About the turn of the century not a few plays were produced which, like *Arden of Feversham*, appealed to the direct personal interest which. from the nature of the case, popular audiences never have failed, and never will fail, to take in the detailed representation of horrible domestic crime. *The Yorkshire Tragedy*, printed in 1608, and also attributed to Shakspere, will be noticed below. *The Warning for Fair Women* was printed in 1599. Robert Yarrington's *Two*

Tragedies in One[1], partly treating of the assassination of a London merchant of the name of Beech, was printed in 1601, and the same subject seems to have served as the theme of a tragedy by Houghton and Day, called *Thomas Merry* (the name of the murderer), acted in 1599. *The Fair Maid of Bristol*, printed in 1605, likewise turned upon a tragical occurrence of recent date; and Henslowe's *Diary* contains traces of several other plays of a similar nature[2]. But it is contradictory to what we know of Shakspere's work as a dramatist to suppose him to have fallen in with such a fashion; when he turned to domestic tragedy, as Brandes says, he produced an *Othello*. I am in general disposed to agree with an earlier critic[3], that *Arden of Feversham* has little resemblance even to Shakspere's earliest manner, and that there is no evidence of its having been composed prior to his first acknowledged dramas. Possibly his hand may have added a few touches here and there, but the theory of his authorship of the play as a whole must be rejected.

Locrine
(*pr.* 1595).

Locrine[4] was published in 1595, as by 'W. S.' It may, however, have been written at a much earlier date, and the compliment to Queen Elisabeth at the close (where she is said to have reigned for 'eight and thirty years') may have been adapted afterwards. Bernhardi (*Greene's Leben*, p. 33) thought that the date of *Locrine* was fixed, by allusions in it, to some time before the execution of Mary Queen of Scots, if not before that of Babington five months previously (1586)[5]. Schlegel considered the 'evidence in favour of the Shaksperean origin of this piece not wholly unambiguous, the doubts against it, on the other hand, important.' *Locrine* must stand or fall, he asserted, with *Titus Andronicus;* yet, if so, it would be strange that Meres should have mentioned the one and passed by the other. The versification of *Titus Andronicus* seems to me more advanced than that of *Locrine*, which contains only a few double-endings, and in which, as a rule, each line constitutes a complete sentence or a clause of a sentence. Yet though *Locrine* hardly belongs to any species of play in which any of Shakspere's undoubted productions can be classed, it is by no means devoid of merit. Ulrici could not make up his mind whether the original *Locrine* was from the hand of Peele, or from that of Marlowe. Malone held the latter view, supposing the 'W. S.' on the title-page to have been Wentworth Smith, who adapted the play for the stage after Marlowe's death. My own impression is that its manner resembles the writing of Peele rather than that of any dramatist with whom I am acquainted; and the exuberant tendency of its author to classicism recalls the same writer. The freshness and humour of the comic scenes, too, is more in his way than in Marlowe's[1].

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[1] Edited by Mr. A. H. Bullen, in vol. iv. of his *Collection of Old English Plays* (1882).

[2] See Collier's note, vol. ii. p. 437. *The History of Murderus Mychaell*, performed at Whitehall in 1579, according to Collier, vol. i. p. 233, may have had no reference to the story of *Arden of Feversham*, where Michael is the mildest-mannered of the murderers.

[3] *Edinburgh Review*, vol. lxxi. 18.

[4] Printed in the Tauchnitz edition of the *Doubtful Plays*.

[5] The allusions in question are, I suppose, to be mainly sought in the passages concerned with Estrild; but why should these not have been made after Queen Mary's death?

The source of *Locrine* is Holinshed, who derived his narrative from Geoffrey of Monmouth. The histories of Locrine and his daughter Sabrina had been told in a long elegiac poem by Lodge, called *The Complaint of Elstred* (printed with his *Phillis* in 1593), which may have been known to the author of the play, and to the author of *Comus*[2]. In the drama the plot is unfolded with the utmost simplicity. The dying King Brutus divides his kingdom among his sons Locrine, Camber, and Albanact. After his death it is invaded by Humber 'King of the Scythians' and Hubba his son. Humber defeats and kills

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[1] There is a resemblance in act iv. sc. 1 to the scene (act iii. sc. 2) in the *Third Part* of *Henry VI*, where King Edward woos Lady Grey.—Cf. Sachs, *u. s.*, p. 146.

[2] 'Virgin, daughter of Locrine, &c.' See also Bk. i. of Milton's *History of Britain.*—Cf. Gosse, *Seventeenth Century Studies*, p. 31.—Mr. Swinburne, whose drama *Locrine* appeared in 1888, is the latest English poet attracted to the field of fable, of which he so beautifully writes:

> 'Milton's sacred feet have lingered there,
> His lips have made august the fabulous air,
> His hands have touched and left the wild weeds fair.'

Albanact, and is in his turn defeated by Locrine. But that hero falls in love with Humber's wife Estrild, deserting his own wife and cousin Guendolen. Her kinsmen make war upon him; but he clings to Estrild, as Antony clings to Cleopatra, and both die together. The comic scenes are principally carried on by Strumbo, a cobbler, who is pressed to the wars (in which he bears himself like Falstaff), and his servant Trompart[1]. The several acts are introduced by dumb-shows, each being applied parable-wise to Latin mottos or proverbs by Ate, who does duty as 'presenter.' Ghosts abound in the play; and its language is a 'Pyriphlegethon' (to use a word specially affected by the author) of sounding words, and of classical allusions in which not only the Britons, being descended from the Trojans, justifiably indulge, but which the 'Scythians' dispense in similar profusion. A terrific passage in *Locrine* is ridiculed in Ben Jonson's *Poetaster* (act iii. sc. 1), and another in Fletcher's *Fair Maid of the Inn* (act iii. sc. 4).

No reason exists for ascribing this play to Shakspere; nor does it seem necessary to dwell on the suggestion that it represents a *farrago*, in which Shakspere 'interpolated passages from Greene and Peele into the stilted and tedious old tragedy of *Locrine*[2].'

Edward III (*pr.* 1596).

The next in date of publication among these 'doubtful' plays is beyond contention the most remarkable of the entire series. *The Raigne of Edward III: As it hath bin sundry times plaied about the City of London*[3] was first printed, without an author's name, in 1596; a second edition followed in 1599, and was succeeded by others in 1609, 1617, and 1625. The popularity of the theme which fills the first two acts of this play was such as to make it difficult to determine the impulse that may have been given to it by the admirable treatment of the story in the play itself. The dramatist's immediate source was probably Froissart, whose narrative of the episode was reproduced with various additions by Bandello (ii. 37), from whom it found its way into Paynter's *Palace of Pleasure* (i. 46), where it was doubtless read by Shakspere. The widespread favour accorded to the story of Edward's love for the Countess of Salisbury is further attested by the ballad—which may or may not have been inspired by the play—*Of King Edward III and the Faire Countess of Salisbury*, setting forth her 'constancy and endless glory,' noticed by Halliwell-Phillipps as printed in Evans' *Old Ballads*, 1810, vol. ii. p. 301. (See *Notices of Popular Histories*, of which one, without date, treats this story, in *Percy Society's Publications*, vol. xxiii.) Halliwell-Phillipps says that 'there is one, *if not more*, early play on the same subject.' A scholastic drama, *Elisa*, on the loves of King Edward and Elisa, Countess of 'Warwitz,' more or less based upon Bandello, by Philip Waimer, was published at Danzig in 1596, and one of Jacob Ayrer's 'comedies,' written before his death in 1605, on the same theme, was unmistakeably of English origin, although it cannot be proved to have been directly derived from the extant English play[1].

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[1] 'Trompart, fitt man for Braggadochio,' appears in bk. ii, canto iii, of *The Faerie Queene*.

[2] See a review of W. Bernhardi's study of Greene by the late Mr. R. Simpson, which appeared in *The Academy*, about the year 1874.

[3] Edited by Delius, *u. s.*, and by Moltke in the Tauchnitz edition; and included in Dr. Furnivall's *Leopold Shakspere*.

The last three acts of this drama are founded on Holinshed, whose narrative is largely based on Froissart, but who may have also used other early authorities. Holinshed, it should be noticed, rejects the story of Edward's passion for the Countess of Salisbury.

To Capell seems to belong the distinguished credit of having first prominently directed attention to this most interesting production, by publishing it in his *Prolusions*

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[1] See, as to the latter, Cohn, *u. s.*, *Introduction*, p. lxv; and cf. Sachs, *u. s.*, pp. 188-9; where are also noted Calderon's use of the story in his *Amor, honor y poder*, and Calprenède's *Édouard III* (before 1656). William Montfort's *Edward III* (1691) may have been founded on this, as well as on the English play. The *Édouard III* of the delightful J. B. L. Gresset seems to bear out the author's assertion that a large part of it is pure invention, the catastrophe being brought about by the poisoning of Eugénie, countess of Salisbury, daughter of the 'duc de Vorcestre,' by Alzonde, 'héritière du royaume d'Écosse,' and the suicide of the murderess. C. F. Weisse's *Eduard III* (1759), again, appears to have no connexion with its English namesake. The 'fabulous' Countess of Salisbury is thought by Dyce possibly to be the 'English Countess' referred to in Fletcher's *The Nice Valour* (act i. sc. 1).

(1760) as 'a play thought to be written by Shakespeare.' Steevens treated the suggestion with contempt; and although a translation of it appeared in Tieck's *Vier Schauspiele von Shakespeare* (1836), it would appear that its translator was Count Baudissin, and that Tieck was not even responsible for the publication of the volume[1]. Shakspere's authorship of the play is maintained by Ulrici; Delius obviously inclines in the same direction, although in the absence of all external evidence not venturing to arrive at a positive conclusion. H. von Friesen, while pointing out many parallel passages and allowing the high merits of the play, considers that it lacks the originality of great genius, and fails to exhibit the full perception of the meaning of history, to which Shakspere had attained in the probable period of its composition. The parallel passages he accordingly explains as due at least in some measure to reminiscences in Shakspere of the work of another. Dr. Furnivall, as I think successfully, disposes of the hypothesis that Shakspere wrote the entire play. But he is also unwilling to accept the theory that Shakspere wrote the love-episode, while admitting that he 'must have read and been impressed by act ii; perchance he saw the play acted.' Mr. Fleay[2], on the other hand, maintains that *Edward III* was originally—in 1590—written by Marlowe, to whose authorship he supposes Greene to allude in citing in his *Never too late* (1590), the phrase *Ave Caesar* (act i. sc. 1), to be found in no other extant play of the time, and that Shakspere—in 1594—added to it the love-story, which occupies act i. sc. 3, and act ii. scenes 1 and 2, where are to be found lines from the unpublished *Sonnets*, and an allusion to the recently published *Rape of Lucrece*[3].

Without in any way binding myself to the acceptance of the theory of Marlowe's authorship of an early *Edward III*, I see no improbability in the assumption of such a play, or in the further assumption that Shakspere wrote the love-episode as an addition to this. But if such was the case, and if the task of adapting the earlier play was put into his hands, he must be said to have acquitted himself of it with but imperfect success. For the most salient defect of *Edward III*, as we have it, is the want of harmony between its parts, which are only linked together chronicle-wise, the later acts (iii–v) containing not more than a single reference to the main subject of the earlier part of the action. And the charm of the play vanishes with the close of the episode of Edward's passion for the Countess of Salisbury and her triumph over it.

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[1] H. von Friesen, *Eduard III, angeblich ein Stück von Shakespeare*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. ii, 1867.

[2] *Life of Shakespeare*, pp. 282-3.

[3] See the fine passage to be immediately cited. H. von Friesen likewise finds in it an incidental suggestion of Shakspere's authorship of the part of the play to which it belongs.

Shakspere's gallery of female characters is marvellously varied; yet it remains incomplete without the Countess of Salisbury, the perfect type of high breeding united to moral purity. Bright and courteous in speech and demeanour, she is firm and unwavering in her adherence to virtue, while free from so much as a trace of affectation or prudery; and her heroic soul both subdues the king's passion and restores him to his better self. Her character is written in Edward's words, addressed to her after on her knees she has won the victory (act ii. sc. 2):

> 'Arise, *true English lady*, whom our isle
> May better boast of, than e'er Roman might
> Of her, whose ransack'd treasury hath task'd
> The vain endeavours of so many pens'—

the poet's own, possibly, among the number. But this peerless character apart, the exceeding beauty of passages in this play, laden with the rich freight of thoughts, must make any reader of it unwilling to dissociate it altogether from Shakspere's name. Who can be compared to him in the power of wedding deep thoughts to the most stirring passages of dramatic action? And where is this power more felicitously exhibited than in the great scenes of act ii of *Edward III*? Moreover, although the last three acts are undoubtedly overcrowded with action, and show traces of haste or incompleteness of workmanship, yet even here are to be found passages in the Shaksperean vein, containing thoughts to be met with again in his undoubted dramas. Such a one is the short speech of Queen Philippa (act v. sc. 1), which occurs in a scene rather hurriedly worked out, but which recalls one of the most beautiful as it is one of the best-known passages in the dramatic poetry of Shakspere[1]. Thus even here a hand resembling his, if not his own, seems to have been at work to relieve the bare facts borrowed from the Chronicle, even where they are most conscientiously transferred. The versification of the play, with its frequent rimes, fairly suits the period of Shakspere's dramatic authorship to which it would belong. But it is only for the body of the first and second acts that the honour of being wholly, or at least substantially, Shakspere's can be claimed with a fair show of reason. This part of the play is full of the conceits in which he indulged in his earlier period; but they are of so felicitous and refined a sort as in themselves to suggest his in preference to any other authorship.

I find no notice of any performance of this play on the English stage since the Elisabethan period[2]. What an opportunity was lost of reviving it during the ascendancy of Helen Faucit, the ideal Countess of Salisbury of these latter days!

Mucedorus (*pr.* 1598).

From *Edward III* it seems an almost precipitous descent —back to the yellow sands of childhood—to the 'doubtful' play which stands next in known date of publication. But according to the first extant edition of *Mucedorus*[3], where on the title-page mention is already made of *the merry conceites of Mouse* to which the extraordinary popularity of the play must be held to be mainly due, it was here 'newly,' i.e. not for the first time, 'set foorth,' as it had been sundry times performed on the London stage. This edition bears date 1598, and not less than eleven editions are known to have followed between this year and 1668. The most noteworthy of these was the impression of 1610, which introduced certain 'new additions,' including the Prologue, the scenes in which Anselmo and the King of Valentia appear, and the first scene of the public's favourite, 'Mouse the Clown.' The popularity of the play survived the suppression of the theatres, during which it was acted by strolling players[1]. A German translation of it by Tieck has been recently discovered and published[2].

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[1] 'Ah, be more mild unto these yielding men!
It is a glorious thing to 'stablish peace;
And kings approach the nearest unto God,
By giving life and safety unto men.'

[2] An *Edward III* (1814), described by Genest (vol. x. p. 232) as 'a poor play by an anonymous author,' was never acted. As these sheets are passing through the press, information reaches me of a contemplated performance, by the Elisabethan Stage Society, of *The King and the Countess, an Episode in the Play of Edward III*, and of *Arden of Feversham*.

[3] Printed in Hazlitt's *Dodsley* (vol. vii); in Delius, *Pseudo-Shakspere'sche Dramen* (vol. ii, 1874), and in the edition (based, unlike that of Delius, on the first quarto) by K. Warncke and L. Proescholdt (Halle, 1878). See also R. Simpson, *Some Plays attributed to Shakspere*, in *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1874; and the researches of W. Wagner (*Jahrbuch*, vol. xi, 1876, and xiv, 1879) and Elze (*ib.* vols. xiii and xv, 1878 and 1880, and elsewhere). Cf. Sachs, *u. s.*, pp. 163–8.

Tieck appears to have regarded *Mucedorus* as a juvenile play by Shakspere; but this fancy is a mere hallucination. The only external indication in this direction is the circumstance that it was bound up with two other plays, *Fair Em* and *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*, for the library of Charles II, and labelled 'Shakspere's Works, vol. ii.' The late Mr. Simpson was probably right in supposing *Mucedorus* to have been attributed to Shakspere on account of the additions made in the edition of 1610, inasmuch as such a supposition could hardly have been entertained with regard to the play as printed in 1598 and 1606. The circumstance that the 'Musidore' of Chettle's *Englande's Mourning Garment* (1603) has been held to refer to Lodge, points to him as the possible author of this play—a theory adopted on other grounds by Mr. Fleay[3]. The enduring theatrical success of *Mucedorus* is, as already observed, due above all to the buffoonery of 'Mouse the

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[1] On the occasion of a performance of *Mucedorus* at Witney in Oxfordshire in 1653 some persons lost their lives by an accident; and the catastrophe was 'improved' in a pamphlet entitled *Tragi-Comoedia*. It had been previously performed in several other country places. See Collier, vol. ii. p. 47.

[2] By Dr. J. Bolte (Berlin), who found the translation among Tieck's literary remains.

[3] *English Drama*, vol. ii. p. 50.

Clown,' which is of the broadest kind; in addition, however, the *dramatis personae* include, for the benefit of the multitude, a Bear—and Elisabethan spectators were *connoisseurs* in bears—not to mention a Wild Man of the Woods. The action is simplicity itself, while the diction is, with the exception of a passage or two in the later additions[1], if possible, even simpler than the action. Prince Mucedorus disguises himself as a shepherd and rescues Princess Amadine from the clutches of a bear[2]—Segasto, to whom she was to be married, having saved his life by flight. Hereupon, she is on the point of eloping with her preserver, when she falls into the hands of Bremo, a kind of Polypheme of the forest. From his feasts[3] and frolics she is saved by her lover, who has disguised himself as a hermit; and they then return to court, where on the arrival of his own anxious father Mucedorus reveals himself. Throughout this delectable action are interspersed the humours of Mouse, which from his first entrance onwards[4] must be allowed to be extremely diverting.—Without asserting that Shakspere's hand never came into contact with this in substance infantinely rude production, we may ignore the suggestion as devoid of either proof or probability.

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[1] These include neither the curious dialogue between Comedy and Envy at the opening of the play, nor more than a portion of that at its close. The added passage which contains the proposal of Envy to ruin Comedy by engaging a

'scrambling Raven with his needy beard'

to write a play full of political allusions and thus bring trouble upon the theatre, obviously refers to some actual incident, and must have been designed, with the context, to deprecate the wrath of the authorities. But there is no internal evidence in these lines to show that Shakspere wrote them on behalf of his company.

[2] To this incident, paralleled by one in *The Bride of Lammermoor*, which it has been found so difficult to reproduce on the stage, there is an allusion in Field's *Amends for Ladies*, act v. sc. 2: 'He looks like the bear in the play; he has killed the lady with his very looks.'

[3] 'Thou shalt be fed with Quails, and Partridges,
With Black-birds, Thrushes, and Nightingales.'

There is a certain element of pathos in this embryonic Caliban.

[4] 'O horrible terrible! Was ever poor Gentleman so scar'd out of his seven senses? A Bear? Nay, sure it cannot be a Bear, but some Devil in a Bear's doublet: for a Bear could never have had that agilitie to have frighted me.'—(This scene, however, is one of the additions of 1610.)—The way in which Mouse 'falls over' both the quick and the dead is worthy of early Victorian pantomime.

Sir John Oldcastle, Part I (pr. 1600).

The First Part of the true and honorable history of the Life of Sir John Oldcastle. the good Lord Cobham, has been noticed above[1]. The title of this play was entered on the Register together with that of a *Second Part*, not known to have been printed; the *First Part*. of which Henslowe notes the first performance under the date of October 16, 1599, was printed in 1600 with the name of William Shakespeare. Although the play has its merits, it contained nothing to warrant so presumptuous a fiction.

The London Prodigal (pr. 1605).

With regard to *The London Prodigal*[2] again, which Ulrici conjectured to have been written by one of the joint authors of *The First Part of Sir John Oldcastle*, the question is not whether it was Shakspere's work, but how it came to be printed with his name, in 1605. Schlegel, to be sure, inclined to think the play Shaksperean, and put on record his impression that 'already Lessing judged this piece to be by Shakspere, and intended to produce it on the German stage[3].' Lessing's inclination towards the domestic drama, of which this play furnishes an early specimen, is exemplified by some of his own works, and was fostered by the example of the later English theatre[4]. In the Elisabethan age it was, as will be seen, successfully essayed by several dramatists, among whom the palm may be assigned to Thomas Heywood; but there is no reason for ascribing to him *The London Prodigal*. While the comic passages in this play are not, in my judgment, conspicuously happy[5], the pathos which really distinguishes it is to be found in the situations bringing before us the woes of the faithful Luce.

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[1] *Ante*, vol. i. pp. 434–5; cf. pp. 122–3 of the present volume.

[2] Printed in vol. i of the *Ancient British Drama* (1810), in Hazlitt's *Supplementary Works of Shakespeare* (1869), and in the Tauchnitz *Doubtful Plays*.

[3] *Lectures, &c.*, vol. ii. part ii. p. 238 (original).

[4] *Miss Sara Sampson* (1755) distinctly introduced the species into the German drama: Diderot was the chief agent of its entrance on the French stage.—The earliest specimen of domestic tragedy (*tragedia cittadina*) in Italy, where however it found few imitators, is said to have been the *Soldato* of Angelo Leonico of Genoa, printed 1550. See J. C. Walker, *Memoir of Italian Tragedy*, p. 92.

[5] The Prodigal's attempt at an Italian quotation is diverting (act iii. sc. 2): 'The Italian hath a pretty saying. *Questo*—I have forgot it, too; 'tis out of my head; but in my translation,' &c.

She is a kind of patient Grissel, although her husband displays but scant anxiety for a successful result of the experiment which she has to undergo. The diction of these scenes, however, reveals little pathetic power. (The dialogue consists of an intermixture of prose and verse.) Altogether, though the literary workmanship of the play is coarse, its action is brisk enough. The plot might, of course, have been suggested by some incident or anecdote of real life; and it seems unnecessary to recall the treatment of similar subjects in different ways in early moralities[1]. An unmistakeable resemblance may, however, be noted in the opening of the action, and in act i. sc. 1 more especially, to the perennially popular *School for Scandal*, where Charles Surface represents the Prodigal; but the plot in the old play takes a quite different turn, and there is no attempt here to enforce the dangerous moral which Sheridan has not unjustly been charged with insinuating, although it is put forward in a crude form by the Prodigal's father at the beginning of the play[2].

There seems no warrant for associating Shakspere's name in any way with this estimable production[3].

The Puritan (pr. 1607).

The astonishment with which one finds inferior works of this description to have been attributed to Shakspere by literary critics—for their publication or announcement as his by booksellers is a quite different matter—reaches its climax in the case of *The Puritan, or the Widow of Watling Street*. It was published with the initials 'W. S.' in 1607, as acted by the children of St. Paul's—strange performers for such a composition—who are not known to have acted any of the undoubted plays of Shakspere. The piece was obviously written by a member of one of the Universities—in all probability an Oxford man, as would seem to be indicated by an amusing passage (act i. sc. 2), where, as Dr. Farmer pointed out, the phraseology employed has an Oxford colouring[1]. This incidental conjecture would not be irreconcileable with the view of Mr. Fleay, to which Mr. A. H. Bullen is disposed to assent, that the author of *The Puritan* was Middleton, whose poorest play, however, with a single exception, his editor allows it to be. There are, no doubt, in this comedy certain resemblances of detail to passages in Middleton, and the satire against the Puritans is quite in his way, though hardly distinctive of him[2]. Dyce[3] thought that *The Puritan* was most probably written by Wentworth Smith, 'an industrious playwright,'—fortunate in his initials. In any case, it is not Shakspere's, although a friend of Schlegel, 'well acquainted with Shakspere,' believed that he in this play carried out a fancy of 'once in a way writing a play in the manner of Ben Jonson.' Schlegel himself allowed that on such a hypothesis a critical enquiry might have to go very far in the way of refining[4].

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[1] I am rather at a loss to understand the meaning of Klein, *Geschichte des Dramas*, vol. x. p. 173 *note*, when, after making the same obvious comparison as that suggested above with the theme of *Patient Grissel*, he remarks that *The London Prodigal* is, so far as he knows, the single subsequent attempt, in the whole cycle of myths treating the motive of wifely constancy and self-sacrifice, to make use of it in the sphere of narrow domestic life (*in engbürgerlicher Sphäre*).

[2] 'Believe me, brother, they that die most virtuous have in their youth lived most vicious; and none knows the danger of the fire more than he that falls into it.'

[3] The supposition of the late Mr. R. Simpson, that the play contains one of a series of early attacks by Shakspere upon Greene (*New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1875–6, p. 162), appears to me to rest on no sufficient basis.

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[1] 'Troth, and for mine own part, I am a poor gentleman, and a scholar; I have been matriculated in the University, wore out six gowns there, seen some fools, and some scholars, some of the city, some of the country, kept order, went bare-headed over the quadrangle, eat my commons with a good stomach, and battled with discretion; at last, having done many sleights and tricks to maintain my wits in use (as my brain would never endure me to be idle), I was expelled the University, only for stealing a cheese out of Jesus College.'

The last touch is happily impudent; for the College in question has always maintained a close connexion with the Principality.

[2] See *English Drama*, vol. ii. pp. 92 3; and cf. *Introduction* to Mr. Bullen's edition of *The Works of Thomas Middleton*, vol. i. (1885) pp. lxxxix–cx.—Mr. Bullen rejects the further theory that the announcement on the title-page of *The Puritan*, 'by W. S.' signified 'written concerning William Shakespeare,' whose jests it is the purport of the play to travesty. Middleton, *The Puritan Maid, Wanton Wife and Modest Widow* (entered 1653), must have been a different piece.

Introduction to Peele's *Works*.

[4] *Lectures, n. s.*, p. 232.—It is well to remember, in this connexion, the judicious observation of Professor Hales, in his admirable *Essays and Notes on Shakespeare* (1884), p. 190, that 'in several of Shakespeare's plays a satirical element is perceptible—is obvious; but it never becomes supreme.'

This comedy, which is said to owe its second title to an old ballad, is a coarse caricature of the 'respectable middle-class,' and of its favourite religious party. The hero of the play is George Pyeboard, *i.e.* Peele, so named in honour of the ribald *Jests* fathered upon the celebrated dramatist[1]. At the close a nobleman comes on as a kind of *deus ex machinâ*, a superior being who sets everything right by pointing out to the benighted inhabitants of the City the abject folly of their ways. The comedy in fact hardly rises above the level of a farce, and there is little or no strength in the characters either of the Puritans or of their dissipated besiegers. The play was obviously a hurried contribution, with which it is out of the question to discredit Shakspere, to the conflict which had early in James's reign once more arisen between the City and the stage—a contribution ill-calculated to lessen the acrimony of the conflict in question.

A Yorkshire Tragedy (*acted and pr.* 1608).

Some real importance, so far as the question of Shaksperean authorship is concerned, attaches to *A Yorkshire Tragedy*, a short piece in a single act, which was performed in 1608 at the Globe theatre, and entered and printed in the same year[2] 'as written by W. Shakspeare.' It was reprinted with Shakspere's name in 1619. When first produced at the Globe, it was performed together with three other plays under the title of *All's One*[3]. The *Yorkshire Tragedy* is the dramatisation of a horrible tale of murder. The event which it reproduces occurred in 1604, and is related in Stowe's *Chronicle*. After the fashion of the times—a fashion which it is to be feared has not died out in our own—the story was at once turned into a ballad for popular consumption. Shakspere's hand is, to my mind, traceable in portions of this play,—more particularly in the Husband's speech, beginning 'O thou confused man' (sc. 4), and perhaps in the subsequent affecting scene with the little Boy. On the other hand, the powerful situation in the concluding scene between Husband and Wife is inadequately worked out; and altogether it is not easy to believe that, at the time when Shakspere was composing the noblest works of his maturity, he should have condescended to take a more than incidental share in so hasty a production, and one dependent in part upon claptrap. Schlegel, who speaks of the tragic effect of this piece as overpowering, believed it to be by Shakspere; so did the French critics F. Guizot and Philarète Chasles; Hazlitt thought it rather in Thomas Heywood's manner. Inasmuch as Ulrici's conjecture, that in this play Shakspere adapted to the circumstances of the Calverley murder an early sketch of his own, may be left aside, the most natural solution seems to be that the piece was not written by Shakspere, but that he inserted passages in it when it was represented in his theatre. Should this be so, it would be curious if his hand had introduced the allusion to Leicester[1].

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[1] Cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 365.

[2] Reprinted in vol. i of *The Ancient British Drama*, in Hazlitt's *Supplementary Works, &c.*, and in Moltke's Tauchnitz edition.

[3] See Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. ii. pp. 105-7, as to the probability that one of these plays was *The Miseries of Enforced Marriage* (which refers to the same murder), by George Wilkins, whose exact connexion with *The Yorkshire Tragedy* Mr. Fleay is however unable to unravel, thus finding himself forced for the present to adopt the assumption of Shakspere's authorship.

Two lines in the *Yorkshire Tragedy*—

> 'Divines and dying men may talk of hell,
> But in my heart her several torments dwell'—

are taken from Nash's *Pierce Pennilesse* (1592). The idea is also to be found in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*[2].

The Merry Devil of Edmonton (pr. 1608).

The Merry Devil of Edmonton[3] was ascribed to Shakspere on the same external grounds as *Mucedorus*[4], to which there is in the present instance the less reason to give credit, since the entry on the Stationers' Register of what is usually supposed to have been the first edition of the play announced it as by 'T. B.' Mr. Fleay is, however, of opinion that the entry referred, not to the play, but to the prose-tale on the subject by Thomas Brewer [1]. Tieck, who believed in Shakspere's authorship of this play, went so far as to assign a date, 1600, to its composition; but this is in any case too late a year, in spite of a certain amount of resemblance to *The Merry Wives* (especially in the character of the host Blague), not to mention that the date of *The Merry Wives* itself is matter of dispute. The play was exceedingly popular; in 1604 it is coupled with Thomas Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness* as a favourite city play [2]; it was reprinted several times, and is referred to by Ben Jonson in 1616 as the 'dear delight' of the public [3]. Of late a Shaksperean authorship of the play has been maintained by Tieck's friend and biographer H. von Friesen (see *Flüchtige Bemerkungen über einige Stücke, welche Shakesp. zugeschrieben werden*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. i, 1865); but the editor of the *Jahrbuch*, Bodenstedt, considers the conclusions of his contributor 'very daring.' Parallel passages may be traceable, they amount, however, to little in the way of evidence. I see no reason for ascribing this play to Shakspere. It is a mere farce,—the story of a trick, sanctified by its good intention and happy ending, played by the hero of the piece upon an unkind father. This hero is a personage of the name of Peter Fabel, round whose tomb at Edmonton the legend hovered that after selling his soul to the Evil One, he contrived to beguile the purchaser,—that in fact his wit was too strong for that of the Fiend [4]. Peter is said to have lived in the age of Henry VII, and to have received his education, which it is grievous to find he turned to so unsatisfactory an account, at Peterhouse, Cambridge.

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[1] Sc. v: '*Husband.* I'll break your clamour with your neck. Down stairs;
Tumble, tumble headlong. So—
[*He throws her down and stabs the child.*
The surest way to charm a woman's tongue,
Is—break her neck; a politician did it.'

The allusion of course is to the death of Leicester's first wife, said in a book called *Leicester's Commonwealth*, erroneously attributed to Father Parsons, to have been caused by her being by his orders thrown down stairs at Cumnor.

[2] Cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 334. The thought is to be found in many other writers.

[3] Printed in Dodsley's *Old Plays*, vol. v, and in vol. ii of *The Ancient British Drama*.

[4] *Ante*, p. 226.

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[1] See *English Drama*, vol. i. p. 313. The tale was published in 1631. Cf. Proescholdt, *ap.* Sachs, *u. s.*, p. 169.

[2] In Thomas Middleton's tract *The Black Book.* See *Works,* vol. viii. p. 36.

[3] See the Prologue to *The Devil is an Ass:*

'And show this but the same face you have done
Your dear delight, *The Devil of Edmonton.*'

A different version of an episode in the story is referred to in *The Staple of News* (i. *ad fin.*).

[4] The legend of Peter Fabel is said to be identical with the German popular story of the Smith of Apolda, for which see Thoms, *Lays and Legends of Various Nations* (1834).

The play has, in accordance with an unauthenticated tradition[1], been confidently ascribed to Drayton, who has in his *Polyolbion* described the localities over which Fabel makes his 'spirits dance their nightly jigs[2].'

The Life and Death of Thomas Cromwell (*pr.* 1613; *entered* 1602).

The Life and Death of Thomas Lord Cromwell[3] in a sense connects itself with the *First Part of Sir John Oldcastle*, the authorship of which has been already pointed out. As the latter play was probably written to make capital out of Shakspere's mistake in turning Oldcastle into a comic figure, so the former, as has been suggested by Malone, was probably reprinted in 1613, with the initials W. S. (no copy is extant of an edition entered in 1602), in order to take advantage of the popularity of Shakspere's *Henry VIII*, acted as a 'new play' in the same year. 'W. S.' may have been Wentworth Smith, but certainly was not William Shakspere, who could not possibly have produced so poor a play. Farmer fathered it on Heywood. As a series of biographical scenes—which are connected by means of a Chorus—it may have produced a considerable effect. For materials the author seems, besides Fox's *Book of Martyrs*, to have used a novel of Bandello's (see Simrock, ii. 324 *seqq.*), to which Shakspere could hardly be supposed to have resorted in a work written in the period of his maturity, and connecting itself in subject with the entire series of his dramas from English history. (There were also in existence a number of ballads 'for and against Lord Cromwell.') But though Schlegel declares this play (together with the *First Part of Oldcastle* and *The Yorkshire Tragedy*) to be 'not only undoubtedly by Shakspere, but to belong, in my judgment, to his maturest and most excellent works,' the whole tone of the play is quite unworthy of the poet to whom it has been ascribed [1].

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[1] The antiquary Coxeter, who died in 1747, saw a MS. with the inscription 'by Michael Drayton.' See Fleay, *u.s.*, where it is argued that the play was originally called *Sir John Oldcastle*. Cf. *ib.*, vol. i. p. 151.

[2] See Charles Lamb's kindly tribute to the 'Panegyrist of his native earth,' in a note to a passage from this play in his *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets*.

[3] Printed in *Ancient British Drama*, vol. i, and by Hazlitt and Moltke; and edited, with *The Birth of Merlin*, by Mr. T. E. Jacob in *The Victoria Library*, 1889.

Faire Em (*pr.* 1631).

Of *Faire Em, the Miller's Daughter of Manchester; with the love of William the Conqueror* [2], the earliest known impression appeared in 1631, but it was certainly in existence at a far earlier date, when passages from it were quoted, with a distinctly controversial intention, in the *Epistle* prefixed by Greene to his *Farewell to Folly* (entered 1587, but not published with the *Epistle* before 1589, or known to have been so published till 1591). The solitary—and rather sorry—piece of evidence supporting the claim of this play to be considered a work of Shakspere's is the same as that put forward on behalf of *Mucedorus* and *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*. It has also been attributed to Greene [3], to whose manner, as exemplified in *Friar Bacon* and elsewhere, it may readily be allowed to bear a certain superficial resemblance, but to whom the evidence just cited explicitly prohibits us from assigning it. In an argument more elaborate than convincing, the late Mr. R. Simpson sought to deduce from the quotations in question, taken together with other passages which in his view illustrated the relations between Greene and Shakspere previously to the publication of *The Groatsworth of Wit* (1592), the conclusion that *Faire Em*, as having manifestly given offence to Greene in 1589 or soon afterwards, was written by Shakspere. Since, however, 'it would be an insult to criticism to ask us to consider' the play in its extant form to be Shakspere's, Mr. Simpson fell back upon the supposition that he 'perhaps' wrote it in an earlier form; and that at all events it was a double theatrical allegory, designed to exhibit the conquest of a Manchester audience—previously devoted to Greene and his works—by companions of the conquering actor, William Kemp, who had himself departed for Denmark [1]. It remained for Mr. Fleay to vary the details, and to divert the point, of the argument by assigning the play, of which Greene resented the satirical purpose, to Robert Wilson, the author of *The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London* [2].

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[1] See Schlegel, *u. s.*, and cf. the speech in which Cromwell takes leave of life and fame (act v. sc. 5) with Wolsey's farewell in *Henry VIII*. Schlegel's fallibility is indeed a warning to critics!

[2] Reprinted in vol. ii of R. Simpson's *The School of Shakspere* (1878); in vol. ii of Delius' *Pseudo-Shakspere'sche Dramen* (1874), and in Warncke and Proescholdt's *Pseudo-Shakespearean Plays*, i. (1883).

[3] For the first time, so far as is known, by Edward Phillips in his *Theatrum Poetarum* (1675).

From critical efforts of so far-fetched a kind one falls back with a certain sense of relief upon the easy-going method of Tieck, who translated *Faire Em* in vol. iii of *Shakespeare's Vorschule*, and expressed himself inclined to regard it as a juvenile work by Shakspere, while considering it too feeble to be attributable to either Marlowe or Greene. Delius has sufficiently exposed the shortcomings of this backward-and-forwards system of criticism. The truth is, that neither in the diction and versification of the play on the one hand, nor in its method of construction on the other, is there much to bring it home to any known dramatist of the period of its production, or anything to bring it home to Shakspere. Indeed, it would be difficult to find a more striking example than *Faire Em* of a play made up of two plots which remain to all intents and purposes distinct from one another until near the close of the action. Such a process of construction—although common enough in a later period of our dramatic literature, and frequently to be met with in theatrical productions devoid of literary pretensions—is intrinsically feeble, and contrary to the tendencies and habits of Shakspere, who often constructed hastily, but rarely or never without a strong and definite design. And in *Faire Em* it is moreover undeniable that the two plots are alike inept in themselves, so much so indeed as almost to bear out the supposition that their intention was primarily allegorical. One of these plots centres in William the Conqueror, who sails to Denmark to win one lady, is distracted by the charms of another, but finally weds his first love. Of the conjunct plot the heroine is Fair Em, the daughter of the supposed miller of Manchester. Loyal to one lover, she feigns deafness in order to escape a second, and blindness to be relieved of a third, but unluckily thus estranges her original admirer, and is in the end constrained to accept one of his rivals. This twofold series of cross-purposes is however, so far as the dialogue is concerned, pleasantly carried out; and one scene at least in the play suggests the agency of no ordinary hand[1]. The chief personage in the comic scenes, which are of the conventional kind, is Trotter, the miller's man. That the play is 'about Shakspere and Greene' may be a theory worth further consideration; that it was written by either the one or the other seem to me hypotheses equally untenable.

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[1] See the *Introduction* to the edition already cited, and cf. the article *Some Plays attributed to Shakspere* in *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1875-6. These papers are full of a learning the value of which is not absorbed by the extravagance of the conclusion to which it is made to lead.

[2] *English Drama*, vol. ii. pp. 281-3.

The Two Noble Kinsmen (*pr.* 1634).

It will be most convenient, though perhaps not in exact logical agreement with my own view on the subject, to advert in this place to the supposed share of Shakspere in the play of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*[2]. This beautiful product of our romantic drama in the age of its most exuberant fertility was entered and printed in 1634 as by 'Mr. John Fletcher and Mr. William Shakespeare,' but was included neither in the first folio of Beaumont and Fletcher's works, nor in any of the folios of Shakspere. Although from the second folio of Beaumont and Fletcher (1679) onwards the play was systematically included in editions of their works, yet the belief that Shakspere was concerned in it maintained itself with singular tenacity from Langbaine to Pope, Warburton and Farmer[1]. Steevens, however, stoutly asserted that Fletcher alone wrote this tragedy, 'in silent imitation' of Shakspere; and, curiously enough, the Romanticists, with their more sympathetic appreciation of the poetic qualities of the Elisabethans, were unable to attain to any unity of judgment or impression on the subject. Schlegel regarded the play as the joint production of the two poets, while Tieck was 'never able to convince himself that a single verse had been written by Shakspere.' Charles Lamb and Coleridge, the former however with a decisiveness to which the latter made no pretence, favoured the theory of a partial Shaksperean authorship; Coleridge dwelling in particular upon 'the construction of the blank verse, which proves beyond all doubt an intentional imitation, if not the proper hand, of Shakspere.' On the other hand, Shelley refused to 'believe that Shakspere wrote a word of the play,' while Hazlitt, on whose independence of judgment a high value is to be set, although allowing that the first part seemed written in Shakspere's manner, saw 'no reason to suppose that it was his.' So divided was the state of opinion when, in 1833, the late Professor W. Spalding put forth his *Letter on Shakspere's Authorship of the Two Noble Kinsmen*, a critical essay of which the value is by no means confined to the effect exercised by it upon the progress of the controversy with which it was primarily concerned. Spalding's enquiry long remained the most complete and powerful plea for the conclusion that in the several portions of the play the styles of Shakspere and of Fletcher are to be clearly distinguished; and it converted Dyce, who had at first denied to Shakspere any share in the play[1]. It is noticeable that seven years later Spalding declared his opinion on the subject to be less decided than it once had been, and that in 1847 he pronounced the whole question insoluble[2]. In the same year, however, a close examination of the play led the late Mr. S. Hickson[3] to conclusions advanced perhaps in manner rather than in substance beyond those of Spalding's *Letter*. He held it to be established that 'the play of *The Two Noble Kinsmen* is one to which Shakspere possesses a better title than can be *proved* for him to *Pericles*; that to him belong its entire plan and general arrangement; but that, perhaps for want of time to complete it by a day named, and probably by way of encouragement to a young author of some promise, he availed himself of the assistance of Fletcher to fill up a portion of the outline.' These arguments were reinforced by the results of Messrs. Furnivall's and Fleay's application of important metrical tests (the double-ending and the stopped-line) to the allocation of scenes proposed by Mr. Hickson; and to these results a final weight added by the enquiries of the late Mr. Littledale. It seems needless further to extend the review of opinion on the subject. Gervinus refused to accept the 'imputation' to Shakspere of a share in this drama, while Dr. Ingleby thought the assumption unquestionable; other critics, including Dr. Ingram, Professor Dowden, and Dr. Furnivall, seem on the whole at one in wishing to reserve their final decision, or the possibility of a corrective *pronunciamiento*. And there remains an ulterior method of escape, which has already been constituted the basis of a theory, that the dramatist who coöperated in this play with Fletcher was not Shakspere, but another.

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[1] Viz. Fair Em's rejection of the faint-hearted Manville (act v. sc. 2): 'Lay off thy hands, disloyal as thou art,' &c.

[2] For a notice of the dramatic and general literary characteristics of this play, see below, under Fletcher.—*The Two Noble Kinsmen* was reprinted from the quarto of 1634, and edited, from the same text, with critical and illustrative notes, by the late Mr. H. Littledale for *The New Shakspere Society*, 1876. The exhaustive *Introduction* followed in 1885. This is the standard edition of the play; and includes a bibliography of previous editions. Besides being included in the editions of Beaumont and Fletcher, from the second folio (1679) onwards, it was reprinted by Charles Knight in the supplemental volume of his *Pictorial Shakspere* (1841, 2nd edn., 1866), and edited by H. Tyrrell in *Doubtful Plays* (*n. d.*), and by Professor Skeat (Pitt Press Series, 1875), and has been recently republished by Professor Herford (*Temple Dramatists Series*, 1897). The play also finds a place in vol. viii of Dyce's second and third editions of Shakspere (1867 and 1876), and in Dr. Furnivall's *Leopold Shakspere*.

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[1] See Littledale, *Introduction*, p. 70. Pope considered that *The Two Noble Kinsmen* had 'little resemblance to Fletcher,' and more of Shakspere 'than some of those which have been received as genuine.' Warburton thought the whole of act i written by Shakspere, 'but,' he characteristically added, 'in his worst style.'

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[1] Spalding's *Letter* was reprinted, with *Forewords*, by Dr. Furnivall, and a biographical account of the author by Dr. J. Hill Burton, and a note by Mr. J. H. Stack, for the New Shakspere Society, 1876.

[2] See Furnivall, *Forewords*, *u. s.*

[3] In an essay in *The Westminster Review* (April, 1847), republished under the title of *The Shares of Shakspere and Fletcher in the Two Noble Kinsmen*, with the confirmations by Messrs. Furnivall and Fleay mentioned below, in *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1874.

Practically, the opinion of those who assume a bipartite authorship of the play agrees in assigning to Fletcher the whole of act ii, with the exception of the prose scene i, unimportant notwithstanding certain delightful touches, and the bulk of acts iii and iv. The 'enormous' style, as it has been far from inappropriately called [1], of certain among the remaining portions of the play—more especially the body of act i and of the first, and in a measure of the third and fourth, scenes of act v (where, of course, Chaucer was particularly suggestive)--has, together with the unmistakeable differences of versification, suggested to so long a series of critics the twofold conclusion, that a different hand from Fletcher's was concerned in these scenes, and that the hand in question was Shakspere's. No other issue that has been raised as to the supposed combined authorship of the play seems to me to rise to the importance of a problem. Nothing in the general treatment of the story, or of the personages concerned in it, can, so far as I see, be set down as beyond Fletcher's dramatic powers, or as distinctly alien to his general use of them, or as essentially proper to the methods or manner of Shakspere. This is the more noteworthy, since Mr. Hickson's allocation of the several parts of the play involves the consequence that, with the partial exception of Arcite, every character, down to the doctor who—most evidently a professional brother of the doctor in *Macbeth*—makes his appearance at the end of act iv, was introduced by Shakspere. The subject of the play may be allowed to be specially appropriate to the period of Shakspere's dramatic creativity which produced *Cymbeline* and *The Tempest*, but nothing in the choice of it is alien to Fletcher's tastes and tendencies; indeed, the elements of romantic extravagance which it contains are more suitable to his than to Shakspere's genius. The *crux*, in a word, is to be sought nowhere but in the evidence, difficult to resist, that in portions of this play a hand was at work mightier than that which fashioned the remainder, and in the overpowering force of the temptation to ascribe the powerful and condensed thought and the wondrous poetic afflatus of these portions to Shakspere.

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[1] See G. Darley's *Introduction* to his edition of *The Works of Beaumont and Fletcher* (1856), vol. i. p. xlii.

Against this temptation, however, there must be balanced a whole series of improbabilities. To begin with, Fletcher cannot be shown to have become a writer for the stage before 1606–7, a date too advanced to leave it likely that Shakspere would then have joined with him in the composition of the play. If he did so, it must have been in consequence of some unusual strain upon the resources of the actors, which made success so important that the experienced and successful writer was prevailed upon to aid the young beginner in the opening and at the climax of his play[1]. But it is still harder to believe that Shakspere had a hand in the writing of a play in which well-known productions of his own were laid under contribution. It was not his way to copy, and most assuredly not his way to parody, himself. The Gaoler's Daughter in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* has been, more pointedly than kindly, described as 'Ophelia's ape'; and there are further reminiscences in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* of characters and situations in *Love's Labour's Lost*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and (as Hazlitt pointed out) *Cymbeline*; nor would it probably be difficult to extend the list. Moreover, other considerations have been suggested for doubting that Shakspere should have associated himself in the season of his maturity with a production so different from the works which unmistakeably belong to it. The frequent change of scene and the abundance of soliloquies form arguments in this direction[2]. I would add that the want of inner connexion between the under-plot and the main story of the action—quite in the later manner of our Elisabethan and Jacobean drama—could hardly have commended itself to his implied approval.

Collier sought a way out of the difficulty by the suggestion that Shakspere remodelled an old play by Richard

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[1] Some colour is given to this supposition by the concluding lines of the *Prologue*:

'If this play do not keep
A little dull time from us, we perceive
Our losses fall so thick, we must needs leave.'

[2] Cf. H. von Friesen in *Jahrbuch*, vol. i, 1865.

Edwardes, which had been acted before Queen Elisabeth at Christmas, 1564-5[1]—and that this was the *Palamon and Arsett* performed at Newington Butts in 1594[2]. The Shakspcrean alterations and additions to this play he supposed Fletcher to have used for the play as printed in 1634. But if we are to assume Shakspere to have been the author of the passages attributed to him in this play, there is much force in Dyce's observation that they are everywhere 'stamped with the manner of Shakspere's later years,' and quite unlikely to have been composed by him at as early a date as 1594.

Attempts have indeed, as already observed, been made, while adhering to the theory of a bipartite authorship of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, to assign the scenes and passages not written by Fletcher to a hand which was neither his nor Shakspere's. Charles Knight suggested Chapman, but the conjecture has met with no support. Far more to the point is the elaborate argument of Mr. R. Boyle in favour of Massinger[3], who, as he points out, was 'associated with Fletcher in the authorship of several plays,' who was fond of classical allusions and has 'continual touches showing that some passage of Shakspere was running in his mind,' and who, 'to crown all, has a metrical style which may be regarded as the continuation and legitimate developement of Shakspere's.' All this is well, and Mr. Boyle is justified in vindicating the great qualities of Massinger against the influence of Charles Lamb's criticism; but it hardly suffices to bring home to Massinger the rare imaginative power of some at least among the disputed passages. Finally, Mr. Fleay has put forward, but not apparently with much confidence, a plea on behalf of Beaumont who, as he insists, was unwilling to be known as a playwright; whence the *Prologue* speaks of 'a writer,' ignoring the duality of authorship.

The ordinary result of a prolonged reflexion on the problem of the authorship of the doubtful portions of *The Two Noble*

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[1] Cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 211.

[2] See Henslowe's *Diary*, p. 41, and Collier's note.

[3] *On Massinger and The Two Noble Kinsmen* in *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1882.

Kinsmen seems to be either an increased unwillingness, or at least a diminished willingness, to decide it in favour of the only specious claim—that which has been advanced on behalf of Shakspere. Even the use of some of the metrical tests fails to secure conviction from authorities specially skilled in applying them[1]. A very uncertain sound is virtually all that oracles, usually responsive[2], can be prevailed upon to emit on the subject. Amidst so embarrassing an ebb and flow of opinion, I feel unable to abandon the twofold conviction, strengthened rather than impaired by a repeated perusal of this, notwithstanding its defects, irresistibly attractive play, that Fletcher either was not author of the whole, or (which is far less probable) wrote its several parts at very different periods of his career as a dramatist; and again, that the supposition of Shakspere's authorship of the passages which have, with more or less of variation, been ascribed to him remains both improbable and unproved—unless by the negative argument that the claims of no other contemporary dramatist call for comparative consideration.

The Birth of Merlin pr. 1662.

Last in date of publication—and holding the very humblest position as to pretensions to Shaksperean authorship—stands *The Birth of Merlin, or The Childe hath found his Father*[3]. This production was published by the booksellers Kirkman and Marsh, in 1662, as the joint work of Shakspere and William Rowley. The latter co-operated with several other writers in the composition of plays, among them notably with Middleton, whom Mr. P. A. Daniel accordingly suggested as the joint author of *The Birth of Merlin*. I am not aware that this conjecture rests on any substantial basis[4]; and William Rowley's claim to the paternity of the play calls for no discussion here[5]. Shakspere, at any rate, may be acquitted of any share in the imputation. *The Birth of Merlin* is a dramatic version—very possibly based on an earlier attempt on the same subject [1]—of the legend which attributed Merlin's gift of prophecy to direct inheritance from his father, the Devil. In the play the father and the son finally contend for the mastery; and the former is duly worsted, being shut up in a rock by means of a terrific curse couched in fairly elegant Latinity [2]. After thus disposing of his sire, Merlin promises to his still-vext mother a quiet, though repentant, old age, and after her death a monument upon Salisbury Plain. The story of the wanderings of 'Uter Pendragon' is mixed up in the main action; the result being a strange medley of romance and farce, containing, indeed, occasional touches of vigorous character-drawing and signs of decided originality, but altogether of so rough and rude a texture that the possibility of Shakspere's participation in the piece is altogether out of the question. A certain poetic beauty cannot be denied to attach to the figure and the conduct of the Prince; but the conflict exhibited in his person between duty and passion displays none of the psychological depth which on such an occasion Shakspere must have revealed. I see no necessity for any lengthy remarks on the treatment of a subject closely connected with that of Spenser's masterpiece by a dramatist whose design seems to have fallen short of the poetic conception of a poetic theme, while his execution, though vigorous, is so coarse as to give a burlesque air to much of his drama. Shakspere at least could never have taken part in a work which after so rude and coarse a fashion ventured on the same kind of ground as

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[1] See the observations at the close of the paper by Dr. J. K. Ingram on *The Light and Weak-Ending Test* in *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1874, pp. 454 *seqq.*

[2] Such as Professor Dowden and Dr. Furnivall; and the late Professor ten Brinck; see *Jahrbuch*, 1878, vol. xiii. p. 93.

[3] Reprinted by Delius in vol. i of *Pseudo-Shakspere'sche Dramen* (1854); by Moltke in the Tauchnitz *Doubtful Plays* (1869); and edited, together with *The Life and Death of Thomas Lord Cromwell*, by T. E. Jacob (1889).

[4] It seems to be ignored by Mr. A. H. Bullen in the *Introduction* to his edition of Middleton.

[5] Cf. Barron Field's *Introduction* to Thomas Heywood and William

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Rowley's *Fortune by Land and Sea*, printed for the (Old) Shakespeare Society, 1846, p. vii. The earliest record of William Rowley as a playwright appears to belong to the years 1607–9 (Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. ii. p. 95), so that if the play was by him, it was probably composed long after the publication of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. Cf. Barron Field, *u. s.*, p. vi. Thomas Heywood was familiar with the theme; see his *Merlin's Prophecies and Predictions interpreted, and their truth made good by our English Annals*, with *The Life of Merlin*, 1651.

[1] '*Uterpendragon*' had a run in 1597. See Henslowe's *Diary*, pp. 87 *seqq.*

[2] Act v. sc. 2.

that familiar to his own airy step, both in his early and in his late adventures upon it. The merits of this brisk and bustling play are undeniable; there is a certain genuine freshness in the character of the marvellous boy Merlin—born with the beard and the wisdom of a man. But had Shakspere addressed himself to this part of the Arthurian legend, he would hardly have contented himself with dressing it up in this way for the gratification of the groundlings [1]. Finally, this play contains no passage where, as in passages of *Arden of Feversham* and of *The Yorkshire Tragedy*, and perhaps in portions of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, and most notably of *Edward III*, it is difficult to escape from recognising the touch of an incomparable—and, as at times one would fain believe, an unmistakeable—hand.

Limited scope of the ensuing remarks.

The few remarks which follow, concerning the dramatic genius of Shakspere, are made from certain points of view only; viz. from those on which I may with the least presumption seek to place myself. The utmost that any one student can hope to achieve in the study of a genius such as Shakspere's, is to draw nearer to it from those points of view which are open to him—not indeed disregarding or rashly undervaluing the significance of the rest, but satisfied with the certainty that even to the swiftest perception and to the most conscientious research many veins of treasure must remain closed. When Goethe was aging, he wrote his autobiography, and called it *Truth and Poetry*. Intentionally ambiguous as the title is, it nevertheless distinctly conveys the fact that even he, who commanded and controlled his own being with a serene consciousness rarely given to mortal man, no longer possessed part of himself except in imagination only. What Goethe could not do for the history of his own genius, no critic will accomplish for that of Shakspere's. But every true student labouring in his province will add to the progress of a work which weakness alone would abandon on the pretext of its seeming interminable[1]. Not, of course, that in forming for themselves, and helping others in forming, a critical appreciation of Shakspere they are likely to succeed best who are chiefly intent upon connecting him with the particular intellectual or other interests to which habit or inclination may have accustomed them. On the contrary, they run the risk of letting their conception of him slide into grooves from which it will not easily escape—something like the Alexandrian mythologists who, unable to comprehend the idea of a Zeus uniting in himself a diversity of attributes of supremacy, subdivided him into a multiplicity of chief deities with different activities and characteristics. Such a method of classification may be incidentally productive of interesting results, but they will never amount to a real contribution towards the purpose of all true criticism, viz. a more lucid and complete distinction between what is, and what is not, essential to genius.

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[1] The tale of Merlin, like other episodes of the Arthurian legend, lends itself ill to dramatic, as compared with epic, treatment. But its attractions have repeatedly proved irresistible even in the former direction; and I may mention, as a late attempt, *Merlin, a dramatic poem* (1890), by a talented writer, the late Ralph Macleod Fullerton, Q.C.

I propose, then, to touch briefly upon the influence exercised in Shakspere's age by the great currents of national opinion and sentiment, and of national action more or less directly expressive of these, upon his dramatic work, some of which these currents seem to have helped to carry into particular channels of creative activity. A few observations will be subjoined on the way in which Shakspere regarded political history, and more particularly the political history of his own country. And, without adhering too closely to the three divisions under which it seemed proper to his fellow-actors to arrange his plays in the first collective edition of them, I shall permit myself in conclusion to dwell in some such general sequence upon one or two further aspects of his genius as a dramatic poet, and of the relations between his achievements and the forms of art wherein they were cast and which, taken as a whole, were immeasurably advanced by them.

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[1] The word 'finality' should never be used in connexion with any subject of criticism or of research—and least of all with any great subject of either. The biographical and exegetical portions of this chapter had, for better or for worse, just passed through the press, when Mr. Sidney Lee's notice of Shakspere appeared in vol. li. of his *Dictionary of National Biography*. I think a statement of this fact due to myself, although it can matter little to an Elisabethan scholar unrivalled, in some respects at least, by any of his contemporaries.

Shakspere and his times.

We look upon Shakspere across a great gulf of time, not measured by the number of centuries which has elapsed since the period of his life and death. The England of the present day is a different England from his, and has altered very much more than the little town where the Avon still flows by its green banks, more even than the ancient suburb of the city where he laboured for a fee and earned a fame beyond compare. At what period England ceased to be Merry England, or whether it has ever ceased to be such, may be left unsettled questions; possibly, the Jaqueses are not more melancholy now than they were when the Forest of Arden sheltered outlaws and deer-stealers, and the Audreys are as light of heart and as easily wooed as they were in the days of the poet who drew their type. The main distinctions of human character perceptible among us remain the same to this day; and their dramatic embodiments are as proper to our age as they were to Shakspere's own. But the gulf which separates us from the Elisabethan age is the great Revolution, which gave the first distinct and dominant expression to the conceptions of religion and life under the influences of which since that epoch Englishmen, whether consciously or unconsciously, have lived and acted, and have felt and thought.

The great English Revolution preparing itself.

Of that Revolution the premonitory symptoms had indeed long made themselves felt, and the first manifest signs of its imminence appeared in the very reign which comprised the greater part of Shakspere's literary labours. It was growing apace during the next reign, in a period of his life when the ease of his retirement might have enabled him to observe its growth, without being any longer sensibly touched in his own worldly interests by its progress. But to the wider and deeper significance of that movement he seems to have remained a stranger, like the great body of those with whom age and habits of life could most naturally have brought him into intellectual contact.

It was all but inevitable that this should have been so. No influence from within could conceivably have led Shakspere to sympathise with the Puritan movement; for his genius, sure of itself, had expanded its growth and winged its flight free from dependence upon any school of thought or sect of belief; while the outward circumstances of his life placed him in direct conflict with the outward manifestations of the new morality. Least of all could meditation fed by reading have furnished him with the materials for estimating the significance of contemporary phenomena or the symptoms of the great movement which was preparing itself. A great popular revolution capable of transforming a nation was beyond the actual range of his experience, and the warnings which preceded it were beyond the possible scope of his observation.

The nation unsettled by the Wars of the Roses

For what had the wars of York and Lancaster, which he celebrated in so many dramas, been to the people? A change between master and master, to which the spiritual, who were at the same time the chief intellectual, guides of the people had remained on the whole indifferent, by which its material prosperity was checked, and under which the growth of its political consciousness had been actually thrown back. What had the Reformation, on which he had to touch in his *Henry VIII*, and which at least one previous dramatic writer had contrived to bring into so intimate a connexion with the theme of *King John*, been to the people? A removal of foreign interference with the government of the national Church, and of foreign claims upon the national pocket;—with these results the great body of the population were well content, as its ancestors had for centuries desiderated them. A spoliation of abbots and monks for the benefit of a limited number of fortunate families;—in this process the bulk of the nation acquiesced, after much agitation among those classes who had been immediate losers by the reform. A series of changes of belief, or rather—for why misuse the term?—of changes of dogma imposed as articles of faith by ordinance or statute;—these had come upon the great majority of the population in the reign of Henry VIII as surprises, in the reign of

and the Tudor Reformation.

Edward VI as a bewilderment, in the reign of Mary (less because of the particular excesses of the reaction than by reason of its association with real dangers of foreign influence) as a terror. What to believe, what not to believe, had at times been for the mass of the people a matter almost as hard to remember as impossible to understand. So much however is clear: that neither the arbitrary oscillations of Henry, nor the Calvinistic reforms of Edward, nor again the Catholic reaction of Mary, had brought any freedom in the matter of their spiritual beliefs to the people at large. Moreover, the whole social system of the land had been unhinged. The old nobility, whose ranks had been thinned by the Wars of the Roses, had been forced to make room by its side for a new race of new men, pushing and intriguing, eager for change because in change alone they could find an opportunity for advancement. The jealous pride of the ancient houses, and the eager ambition of the new men, alike disturbed the political atmosphere; the times were hot and troublous; and success now came only to the daring and to the strong.

The national life and the national consciousness expand in Elisabeth's reign.

And then Elisabeth ascended the throne, not at heart unconscious of her task, but long doubtful as to the opportunity and method of accomplishing it. In the end, the accumulation of dangers abroad and at home, which the Queen could no longer hesitate to seek to shake off from herself and her people, and the inevitable necessity that she should either choose the part urged upon her by her foremost counsellors, or fall a helpless victim into the grasp of Spain, placed her in the van of the great struggle of her age, representative of the policy with which we credit her name. Herself comparatively indifferent as to many of the questions for which so many Englishmen and Englishwomen had contended and suffered on either side, she was in the matter of the national creed willing to adjust a basis; but from this, when once authoritatively settled, she would allow none of her subjects to swerve. Fashioned at first with a view to a due assertion of the claims to consideration of her own state and government, her system of policy was at last half led, half forced, to become distinctively

Protestant in its relation to the general progress of Europe. Henceforth all the vigour of the land was directed into a channel of adequate breadth and depth; the independence of the kingdom had to be asserted against its foreign foes; and thus in the throes of a life-struggle was born the greatness of modern England. The desire for action which eagerness for private gain had helped to create, and which might have been frittered away in mere adventure, was thus transmuted into a generous impulse of patriotic self-sacrifice; the men who would have been absorbed in the pursuit of self-advancement or roving in quest of gold, became the true chivalry of Gloriana; and from among buccaneering mariners and soldiers of fortune, as well as from the hardier remnants of the old nobility and gentry of the country, were drawn the truest champions of the cause identified by common consent with the name of the Virgin Queen.

The crisis of 1587-8.

The time of Shakspere's first contact with London life, and of his first connexion with the stage, cannot have been far distant from the epoch when the government of Queen Elisabeth determined to take upon itself the great responsibilities with which she had so long, and so deftly, played fast and loose. It can hardly have been much before, or very much after, the year 1587 that Shakspere became a resident in the capital. About the same time the catastrophe in the drama which commanded the great stage of English public life had at last been reached; and the headsman's axe had cut through a complication of unexampled difficulty and enduringness. On February 8, 1587, Mary Queen of Scots was beheaded at Fotheringhay. It is known how long and how urgently the irrevocable step had been counselled by Elisabeth's trustiest advisers, how plainly and strongly they had warned her that there existed no peace for her, no security for her throne, no safety for her life, so long as the false Duessa lived, more dangerous behind her prison-bars than when she had roamed as seemed fit to her own wanton will. Impulses so habitual to Elisabeth as to render her all but incapable of resisting them had long combined to prolong her hesitation:—her firm belief in the sanctity surrounding an anointed head, her hatred of all revolt, successful or unsuccessful, such as had driven Mary across the Border into her royal sister's untender hospitality,—and besides these the delight which Elisabeth (in whom the *lues diplomatica* was as strong as in most of the Tudors) took in balancing probability against probability. and power against power. At last the die had fallen; and the player who had cast it was for a while tremulously averting her eyes from the issue of the hazard, denying her responsibility for the act which she had ordered, and sheltering herself behind subterfuges of which she best knew the futility. For Mary Stuart had left the legacy not only of her plots but of her wrongs—including the last and the most terrible of these, her death—to an avenger singularly slow in resolving upon action, but proud and resentful, and armed as it might seem from head to foot with the means for striking one great blow, in answer to innumerable defiances of his power, ending in the supreme check upon his great plan of mastering the western world. The year 1588 saw the Spanish Armada in the narrow seas. A crisis had arrived without a parallel in the history of England—if not as to the magnitude, though this was extraordinary, at least as to the directness of its issue.

Others less happy than Shakspere in their times :

Nor should it be forgotten what up to this time had been the relations between Elisabeth and those spirits among her subjects whose energy was swifter than hers, whose courage was more prompt, whose resolution was not like the Queen's, one which often 'let I dare not wait upon I would.' Nothing need be said here of her great statesmen,—of Burghley, sickened again and again by the apparent hopelessness of his endeavours to rouse the Queen to an insight into the true difficulties and real demands of her position,—of Walsingham, ready to meet intrigue by intrigue, and, sternly Puritan at heart, to spin round friends and foes the threads of Spanish or Italian practice,—even of Leicester, vainglorious and selfseeking, but willing on occasion to dare for himself and the Queen what she would dare for neither. But we think, in more direct connexion with our theme, of the experiences of a poet such as Spenser, fully awake to the fact that his lot had fallen in an age of great hope and great

Spenser.

promise, nursing his belief in the great mission of Gloriana and her knights, and interweaving their efforts as a series of crusading episodes into the scheme of his great epos. Had he not, if I may use the expression, been obliged to accommodate his aspirations to the tortuous shifts of a policy which he necessarily was unable to follow in detail; had he not felt constrained to depict Elisabeth and Mary now as friends, and now again as foes; had he not seen his own political leaders mistrusted and misjudged; had he not, in a word, been himself called upon to contend against monstrous doubts and fears innumerable before he could subdue them to his triumphant conception of a Queen who sent out her knights to do deeds worthy of themselves and of her immortal name! Or again, how tragic had been the doom of the gentlest and most generous of all those knights, the Calidore of the Elisabethan chivalry, Sir Philip Sidney! What hopes, what longings had animated the morning—to be followed by how evanescent a day—of that noble life; and how had it ended, how had it been sacrificed, in the petty defence of a great cause, in a half-war carried on by a half-policy, in a paltry and futile skirmish ventured by Englishmen burning to do a deed worthy of their country, even should it lead to nothing but an honourable death!

Sidney.

The influence of the times in accordance with the comprehensiveness of Shakspere's genius.

But when Shakspere came into contact with the centre of our national life, the tide of full action had set in at last. At such a time, it may be said, the whole nation was partner to the struggle. At such a time, all its most active elements, which at crises like these always crest the wave if a nation still possesses men, were astir to supply the leaders, and with them the soldiers and sailors, for the contest. This was no longer a season for weighing the claims of faction, for balancing the considerations of political or of religious tenets. We may dismiss any supposition that Shakspere's maternal blood had at first induced him to think kindly of the martyrs whom his native Warwickshire had furnished to the cause of Rome; but the time had now gone by when any one but a traitor could hesitate between the claims upon him of the cause of his Queen and nation and the bonds of any ecclesiastical system. A Catholic noble led out the English fleet which awaited and beset the coming of the Armada ; it was no sacrilege in the eyes of the brave Lord Howard of Effingham, risking his life and spending his substance, to fire a broadside into the galleons which bore the images of St. Philip or St. George on their gilded prows. No man whose youth falls in such a time, whose imagination is stirred by such events as these and their results, just when he is beginning to concern himself with events and characters beyond the immediate circle of his early home experiences[1], is likely to allow his mind to be narrowed once more—least of all, if the tendency of that mind is neither sectarian nor eclectic, but comprehensive and sympathetic. Thus, so far as we can judge, the influence of the times in which Shakspere began his public life must have contributed to infuse into him that bold and uncompromising patriotism which he shares with all the representative minds of the England of his age, and to encourage and confirm in him that breadth of view—primarily due to his own nature—which has so utterly confounded well-meant endeavours to find in him a demonstrative Roman Catholic or a Bible Protestant eager to testify. In Shakspere, whose buoyancy of spirit is shared by hardly any other of our great poets (unless it be by Chaucer, whose earlier days, at all events, were spent under the influence of an era of not wholly dissimilar national achievements), is reflected the age when England had once more reason to glory in the generous gift of Heaven, which had made her 'of little body with a mighty heart.' No intellect is too great for national feeling of this kind ; but not every poetic genius opens itself, as Shakspere's did, to the full force of the current.

The eagerness and earnestness of the times.

This is, however, but a single aspect of the influence which may be ascribed to Shakspere's times upon the spirit of his creative activity. If the period in which his entrance into public life fell was one of a noble enthusiasm, it was also one of hot and eager excitement. Something has been already said on this head in discussing the characteristics common to the body of his predecessors in our dramatic literature ; and but little need be added here. Feverish hands snatched the enjoyments of life—nor is it at such times that men are least inclined to enjoy their lives, particularly if they are the sons of a full-blooded race whose vigour is far from expended. Poetry had hitherto been regarded by most educated Englishmen as an elegant pastime, and lyric love-making had been largely carried on with the tranquil amplitude of expression usual in so many early Renascence models. But although room continued to be left for these more courtly or academical forms of literary production, they had ceased to satisfy the imagination of an age whose attention was irresistibly directed to very different themes. When half Europe seemed a map of battle-fields, and English names were common among the defenders of Belgian liberties, or among the adherents of the lilies of Bourbon,—when tidings of ships sunk and cities sacked were brought home by every vessel that unshipped its battered sea-rovers in a Devon port, often together with spoils rivalling the Golden Fleece in their magnificence,—the eye and ear of London could no longer remain satisfied with pretty sonnets addressed by lovers, or by literary adepts on their behalf, to the fastidious fair, or with the reproduction on paper or on the mimic stage of classic or would-be classic legends decked out with seductive imagery by the University wits. In this period accordingly fall the efforts of the predecessors of Shakspere's maturity as a dramatist, typified in the creations of him who overtopped them all, the great Marlowe whose influence upon the first period of Shakspere's dramatic productivity would have to be pronounced unique, even if it were possible to prove it to have a mere stimulus of example. And as Marlowe left *Hero and Leander* uncompleted, so Shakspere reserved for a date removed by several years from his first public efforts as an author the composition of *Venus and Adonis*, to whatever extent the theme may have previously attracted his youthful fancy. The impetus of sentiment, without which a great national epoch

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[1] See Mr. Lee's article on *The Topical Side of the Elizabethan Drama*, and more especially his argument that the directly 'topical' character of *Love's Labour's Lost* is quite in conformity with the spirit of the contemporary English drama at large.

in some degree reflected in Shakspere's earlier dramatic works.

is inconceivable, by no means invariably finds an adequate response in the corresponding period of a national literature, or even in the works of its foremost writers. But, if a writer of powerful genius is moved at all by the impulses of a great age with which he is in sympathy, he will of a certainty be moved profoundly. Thus Shakspere, too,—and none of our great dramatists in such a measure as he, the greatest of them all—was under the spell which took possession of the whole of what we properly call our Elisabethan literature.

We have sufficiently seen [1] how, with the more apparent than real exception of Lyly, all the chief dramatists of the age showed themselves subject to the control of its pervading spirit; and, again, how the form of their productions, mainly under the predominant influence of Marlowe, suited itself to the demand which its themes were called upon to meet. A further result of the same intensity in the temperature (if I may so call it) of the age was the rapidity with which its dramatists worked—although candour must allow this condition to be a standing hindrance in the way of playwrights conscious of literary responsibilities. It would be idle to assume that Shakspere worked less rapidly for the stage than either Marlowe or Greene, or, for that matter, Heywood or Middleton. But where, unless in isolated instances, is it possible to discover in him any sign of that breathlessness of haste which disturbs our enjoyment of the achievements of even the most gifted among his predecessors? Whether or not Greene's notorious accusation against him was a charge of literary plagiarism, and whether or not feathers of an alien growth are to be found in his plumage, Shakspere, like Milton after him, was no reckless borrower, and was equally little dependent upon his borrowings.

Such deductions would, however, be in any case inapplicable to mere adapter's work, even if instances of such a process could be convincingly brought home to his hand in any stage of its activity. With regard to the earliest, it is possible that he was so employed upon themes which, like that of

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[1] Cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 447.

Titus Andronicus, accorded with the demand for plots full of sanguinary violence, or which (although here no prejudice must be held to be intended), like the closing episodes of the last Lancaster reign, presented upon the stage the bustle and turmoil of actual war. The demands of the age could not but lead him to try his 'prentice hand on subjects of this description, if at any time the more or less perfunctory process of adaptation occupied its efforts.

The crisis.

Soon, however,—who would have thought how soon?—the national crisis has passed. Although the efforts of their Government have been hampered by the parsimony, more inopportune than ever, of the Queen, to whom the full significance of the danger has only become manifest when, for this time at least, it is nearly over, Englishmen have done their duty; and the winds of Heaven have scattered a defeated Armada round our coasts. Spain can send forth no second like the first; and slowly the war begins to assume a different aspect. Foiled by his revolted provinces, foiled by the politic Huguenot in France, Philip, baffled and bankrupt, with difficulty wards off the assaults of a foe whom he can no longer hope to crush. Before the century closes, the arch-enemy of Elisabethan England is dead.

Old tastes not extinguished, but strengthened;

Fully roused to a sense of its own strength, familiarised by experience with bold and heroic deeds, the nation comes forth from the struggle. It has not changed its nature in a span of years; but it has grown apace, and its whole being has expanded with marvellous rapidity. The old tastes have not been extinguished; the love of classical literature, and the desire to testify to it by quotation and allusion, have survived; and together with them the taste for that modern literature which connects itself most closely with the Renascence movement, viz. the Italian; of the earliest comedies associated with Shakspere's name, one is taken, at least indirectly, out of Plautus, others are more or less indebted to Italian sources. So far from these tastes having been suppressed, the opportunity has arrived for strengthening and heightening them, in proportion as the perspective of Englishmen has been widened. The relations with France have become more intimate; and to this

(see earlier Shaksperean comedies);

fact, in connexion with an actual contemporary experience, testimony is borne by the intermixture of elegancies and crudities which Shakspere associates with the love-adventures of a fictitious King of Navarre. Simultaneously with Italy and France, Spain begins to yield some of the treasures of her romance literature, so uniquely fascinating because of the strange variety of its contributory veins. Her favourite sixteenth century book of fiction suggested one of the twin themes of a play probably dating from near the close of this period of Shakspere's dramatic labours;—although in truth the growing abundance of the materials employed renders it less and less easy to determine the precise debt of any such comedy to its actual or possible sources. During the period in question, the extension of foreign travel and, above all, the progress of geographical discovery, with which the growth of our maritime power was so inseparably connected, had offered to the adventurous spirits of the nation, and to those in especial who were capable of appreciating the opportunities of their times, a wider variety of allurements. Beyond the fringe of the Spanish colonies that remained to be vexed, with or without prospect of immediate subversion, opened the vast regions, untrodden except in dreams by the feet of Europeans, but described in sundry relations full of strange fascination. Here lay the realms whose cities were built of gold, and whose kings were clothed therein; here stretched the endless forests from whose recesses the whole wealth of the tropics beckoned on the venturous to come and pluck the dropping fruits. Upon the mirror of the most widely and variously receptive of poetic imaginations must have fallen a reflexion of all these new, real or supposed, acquisitions of knowledge, even if it cannot be shown that the response in the form of actual reproduction was immediate. The strongest minds are not always the most ready to put aside in favour of vaguer though perhaps wider speculations thoughts and associations which have established a direct claim upon their sympathy: and Southampton's share in the designs of Essex may have long occupied Shakspere's mind more largely than those remoter enterprises in which an interest was taken by both his best-known patrons. To an extent which recent Shaksperean criticism has only begun to gauge, the Elisabethan stage had to pay tribute to its close connexion with the ideas and purposes animating and controlling the tastes and tendencies of its special public. Yet the genius of Shakspere never allowed itself to be mastered by any one particular phase or group of these; and so it came to pass that, before the creative growth of his imagination had ceased to exert itself, it had given responsive expression to the whole sphere of the national ideas and aspirations of the most rapidly formative age of English history.

The sympathies of Englishmen more national than ever before.

But if the national mind had become more wide and diversified in its interests, neither had there ever been a time when these interests were more intensely centred on the progress of that nation's own history. The greatness of England was now no phrase, no matter either of map or of memory; it was a living reality. If her armies had not as of old swept victoriously before them the chivalry of France, she had now shown herself on her own element unconquerable by a power far superior to France in intensity of purpose as well as in spread of dominion; her voice was feared when raised on behalf of the rebels of tyrants and bigots, and where it threatened vengeance for wrongs inflicted on her own sons. Take any period of active patriotic effort in the history of any nation, and the popular literature of that period will invariably be found inclined to a sympathetic study of the national history. It was to the age of Pericles that Herodotus recited the glories won by Athens at Marathon and at Salamis; it was in the age of Frederick the Great that (much to the cynical wonder of that prince) the figure of the liberator Arminius once more came to possess a meaning for the German nation. In the same way, the great national age of the latter half of Elisabeth's reign was in truth a golden time for the most direct popular expression of the nation's historic sense—the English historical drama.

Shakspere's Histories harmonious in treatment.

Already the editors of the First Folio collection of Shakspere's works recognised so marked a distinction between his plays taken from English history and those treating of other historical subjects, whether 'ancient' or 'modern,' that while including the latter among the *Tragedies* at large, they printed the former as *Histories* in a separate group [1]. The literary genesis of these *Histories* is a developement of the Chronicle Histories of Shakspere's predecessors and contemporaries, among whom Marlowe, in his *Edward II*, had already furnished an example of a thoroughly dramatic treatment of a subject derived from the national history. Accordingly, each of these dramas has an epical element in it; while together they form a group connected with one another like chapters of one great book. That the entire group possesses an inner unity corresponding to that of a Greek trilogy, seems to be an unproved assumption, although it is of course easy to treat the plays from *Richard II* to *Richard III* as one great whole, and to regard *King John* as the prologue and *Henry VIII* as the epilogue to the series. But there is sufficient evidence to show that Shakspere worked at the several plays on subjects taken from English history in anything but consecutive order,—apart from the probability that he began his labours in this field by adapting those of other playwrights. All the same, his wonderful intuition gave to the entire series, not exclusive even of the plays which it is impossible to suppose to have been entirely his, an inner cohesion, such as has not unnaturally inspired commentators with the desire of arranging it as a symmetrically-constructed whole. This distinguishes his Histories from the endeavours in the same direction which had preceded them, while rendering it impossible for any subsequent hand to take up his work where he had left gaps in it, or to continue it from the point where he had stayed his hand [2].

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[1] See in the *Jahrbuch*, vol. viii (1872), Baron Friesen's *Ein Wort über Shakespeare's Historien.* Ulrici's views, which I cannot here examine at length, will be found in his *Shakspeare's Dramatic Art.* A later attempt to work out the inner connexion between Shakspere's *Histories* is the essay of W. König, *Shakespeare's Königsdramen, ihr Zusammenhang und ihr Werth für die Bühne* (in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xii, 1877), which also contains some good observations on the appropriateness of the construction of these plays to the conditions of the Elisabethan, as distinguished from those of the modern, stage.

[2] In his *English Historical Plays* (2 vols., 1896) Mr. T. Donovan has made the interesting experiment of arranging Shakspere's ten Histories in chrono-

His materials for the Histories.

So far as his materials were concerned, Shakspere could of course only work with what he had at his command. Any historical study of a broader and more independent kind than that apparent in the chroniclers was foreign to his times; or rather, it began only with their close. But they were by no means devoid of a deep interest in the traditions of the national history; and by this spirit Shakspere was moved in a degree reached by none of his predecessors. The Tudor chroniclers lay open before him; and to their pages—above all to those known as Holinshed's—he resorted with ready trust for the materials of his Histories[1]. Now, these Tudor chroniclers invariably com-

The Tudor chroniclers.

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logical order of subject with the best other Elisabethan plays founded on our national records. No more inspiring series could be presented to the public. It is another question whether Mr. Donovan has acted judiciously in following the example of Edward Fitzgerald in mingling with the functions of an editor those of a dramaturgist.

[1] It was doubtless the greater fulness of Holinshed's treatment, not any difference of spirit, which accounts for Shakspere's general preference of him to Halle. There is no more genuine Tudor chronicler than the latter, and none more innocent of doubt in any case involving the interests of his own country or those of its chosen dynasty. See, for instance, his account of James I of Scotland, which leaves it quite incomprehensible to the English chronicler why the Scottish prince should have found aught to complain of in being detained for so many years as a prisoner by an English king, and how, when at last set free, he should have dared to enter upon a course of policy hostile to that of his generous entertainer. Or see again his account of the Maid of Orleans, in whom he can find nothing but a base and blasphemous witch. Halle's style is very downright and vivacious, and free from the tendency towards dignity and elaboration which characterises his predecessor Fabyan. The Continuation of Halle by Grafton makes up by an abundance of details as to pageants and banquets for the brevity of comment necessary in touching upon the faithfully-chronicled acts of King Henry VIII. The work of Holinshed and his fellow-compilers is partly founded upon that of Halle, but is far more ambitious in its design, and of much greater length in its execution. The full description by Harrison, included in it, of the social and natural condition of England abounds with details of the most varied interest. Dr. Furnivall deserves great thanks for having reprinted it in the *Publications of the New Shakspere Society*, 1877–8, Books ii and iii of Harrison's *Description of Britaine and England*, with copious illustrative matter. In estimating the accounts of the past, relying as they mainly seem to do on doubtful authorities, one is more frequently fain to agree with Shirley (see *Hyde Park*, act i. sc. 2) as to 'the tedious tales of Hollingshed.' When the *Chronicle* approaches the narrative of the writer's own times, the refreshing spirit of personal feeling once more gives life to the writing,—so much life, indeed, that in the original edition certain passages had to be suppressed by order of the Council. But even in his narrative of the early

posed their narratives in the interest of the Lancaster and Tudor dynasties; they deferred to authorities whose partiality is beyond dispute; and their public accepted these views quite unsuspiciously. At no time had the traditions of the dynasty whose glories had reached their height in Queen Elisabeth possessed a claim to be so reverentially and confidingly received; and never before or again was a similar use made of the opportunity to consecrate them—as it were for ever—in the memory of the nation.

How far he was bound by them.

For although Shakspere never lost sight of the dramatic object of any of his works, yet in all his Histories the limits of the action and of the characterisation are alike primarily determined, from first to last, by the design of reproducing in its most striking as well as in its most familiar features a definite chapter of the national annals. With a dramaturgic skill nowhere exhibited more strikingly than in these plays, he expands, compresses, and otherwise arranges his materials; but he binds himself to their statements of facts, as in the main he bases his characters on the hints which they incidentally convey.

Of this assertion it may be worth while to instance two signal illustrations. Shakspere's treatment of the characters of Richard III and Henry V respectively has determined the conception of them to which many generations of Englishmen have adhered. Yet, although stamped with the signature of creative genius, the evil demon of the House of York and the brilliant hero of the House of Lancaster, while alike admirable portraits, are not portraits from the life.

Examples: Richard III,

Richard III, as we have it, was the production, it cannot be doubted, of Shakspere's early manhood; the question of extent to which he made use of earlier materials, possibly furnished by an uncompleted work of Marlowe's, need not occupy us here. Now, what is the dramatist's view, already perceptible in an earlier presentment, of the hero of his play? A prince of royal birth, but not so near to the throne as to

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periods Holinshed is frequently picturesque and dramatic, and in such passages as his account of the wars of Edward III in France we perceive at once how little a dramatist, desirous of arousing a popular interest, needed to add to the materials furnished him by the chronicler.

be able to entertain any expectancy of its reverting to him in the natural course of events. At the same time, a human being whom nature has cheated of something besides his right of birth[1]—as he tells us at the very outset of the play (for he is his own *prologus*; the dramatist desiring that no doubt whatever shall remain concerning the conception to be elaborated through the whole course of the tragedy). For a career of crime the Gloucester of *Part III* of *Henry VI* and *Richard III* seems accordingly to be predestined, inasmuch as he is shut off from the happiness which awaits other men. Thus, he defiantly sets himself the task of struggling across all the obstacles in his path to an end apparently far out of his reach, and pursues that task restlessly and ruthlessly, by craft and by violence, by hypocrisy and by audacity, till at last he falls in a conflict waged as it were against the whole world of order, law and virtue and of human affections and sympathies around him.

Such is Shakspere's Richard, a true hero of tragedy. He typifies man contending against society, the individual defying by the strength of his own intellect and will all the forces naturally banded together against a rebellion such as his, and succumbing at last, like the boar caught in the toils of the huntsmen, who strike down the baffled lord of the forest like a rabid cur[2].

Now, this figure of Richard signified the poetic solution of a problem which to Shakspere's age could only be stated as he stated it. The personality of the vanquished King of the House of York was stereotyped as it had last appeared in a chronicle devoted to the interests of the House of Lancaster[3]. The struggle in which he fell was the crisis of those dynastic wars which had ended by placing on the throne the line which still reigned in the person of its last representative, the Virgin Queen ;—what wonder, then, that her loyal subjects could not read enough, could not see enough on the stage, of the catastrophe and of its central figure! Two plays preceding that of Shakspere—one in Latin, one in English—testify to the unflagging interest of the public in the subject. The sources of historical information were the chronicles of Halle and Holinshed, and the latter was the writer to whom Shakspere was beginning usually to have recourse. Holinshed's account of Richard elaborates two versions, one of which treats him respectfully, going down to the death of Edward IV, while the other paints him in the blackest colours. The original of this second version was Sir Thomas More's narrative of the lives of Edward V and Richard III, inspired by Henry VII's intimate friend and minister and Richard's strenuous adversary, Cardinal Morton, although perhaps it cannot be shown to have been composed by him in its Latin, still less in its English form.

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[1] Camden (*Remains*), while allowing that Richard was a beneficent ruler and endowed with constitutional instincts, says that his 'monstrous birth foreshowed his monstrous proceedings; for he was born with all his teeth, and hairs to his shoulders.'

[2] 'The day is ours, the bloody dog is dead' (act v. sc. 4).—Some singularly fine touches in Shakspere's Richard were—one might say—discovered by Charles Lamb in his criticism of Cooke's performance of the character. (See *Athenæum*, August 4, 1888.)

[3] With this should be contrasted such a contemporary sketch as that in *Christ Church Letters* (Camden Society, 1877), where the Bishop of St. David's is found avowing that he 'lykyd never the condicions of ony prince so wel as his. God hath sent hym to us for the wele of us al.'

This, then, is Shakspere's source. He and his contemporaries believed in the facts which it became his task as a dramatist to explain psychologically from the conception which he adopted of the character of Gloucester, and to mould into a dramatically consistent action. The touches added by himself, the free way in which he dealt with chronology in order to condense and contrast his situations, are licences absolutely at the disposal of the dramatist; but the basis of the play was derived from a popular partisan view. Very possibly, as has been argued by the greatest living authority on the subject and on the period to which it belongs, this view may approach nearer to the truth than the 'doubts' which have at various times been thrown on its authenticity. But Shakspere at all events neither built up nor remodelled historical theories on the basis of original research. He freely adopted a popular conception; and his power as a dramatist was exhibited with a completeness unknown to any predecessor in the field of the national historical drama, by combining with such a conception of the chief personage the exposition of an action conformable to the character conceived. As Lessing says, the task of the tragic poet is to show what the character *as he conceives it* must do under given circumstances; here both the character and the circumstances were given to the poet from without, and though his presentment of them more or less deviated from historical fact, the result is a dramatic truth[1].

Henry V.

A less difficult task—had such a term as difficult existed for Shakspere, whose genius could contain and shape in its mould so vast a variety of ores—was the dramatic reproduction of the popular idea of Henry V, the hero of the Lancastrian dynasty. Animated by this genuinely national conception, the poet set his hand to the writing of a play which, in the well-known phrase of Sir Philip Sidney, 'moves the heart more than a trumpet[2].' Shakspere's *Henry V* stirs, and seems intended to stir, few emotions besides that of patriotism pure and simple. Taken in connexion with *Henry IV* and *Henry VI*, it has been interpreted as teaching great historic truths and moral lessons. Its hero, we are told, 'must varnish over the stain of his title with the splendour of his achievements; this object, seconded by his own spirit of heroic enterprise, led him to commence the great war with France, which however brilliant in its results, as long as he wielded the sceptre and the sword, became afterwards the plague and weakness of England, and by its long continuance almost destroyed for ever the prosperity of the two kingdoms[3].' But the primary object of the author of *Henry V* was to nourish the tradition, which his age had not ceased to cherish, that one Englishman is worth half a dozen Frenchmen[1]. His next purpose was to exalt the glories of the dynasty represented in descent by the Tudor line. On the religious enthusiasm (which was in fact fanaticism) so strangely blended in Henry V with a lofty contempt for his neighbour's rights, Shakspere touches indeed, introducing it, however, as an incidental motive of dramatic effect rather than as a main element of character. He is content to take the King upon the whole as he found him broadly drawn in Holinshed, and to leave aside, as the instinct of the people leaves aside in judging of one of its chosen heroes—Nelson, for instance—all nicer analysis of his moral qualities and of their combination. Doubtful or dangerous questions as to the King's conduct he overleaps with all the hardihood characteristic of popular tradition. He endeavours to suggest a specious excuse for Henry's readiness for war by following the insufficiently authenticated story of a clerical intrigue. He accounts for the King's summary dealing with the Cambridge-Grey-Scroope plot by adopting a still more doubtful tradition alleging the conspirators to have been bribed by French gold. He depicts his hero as single-mindedly and praiseworthily intent upon military glory; and according as his nobles and soldiers participate in the impulse they are commended to a share in our sympathy with the splendid vigour of their royal leader[2].

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[1] An exception has been sought, and I am on the whole inclined to think with reason, in the overcharged scene where Gloucester woos and wins Anne at her father's coffin (this last touch is a Shaksperean invention); but in general it must be conceded that nothing but the substitution of the word 'true' for 'authentic' is needed to take the sting out of Ben Jonson's sarcasm (*The Devil is an Ass*, ii. 1):

'*Fitz.* And Richard the Third, you know what end he came to.
Mer. By my faith, you are cunning in the chronicle, sir.
Fitz. No, I confess I have it from the playbooks,
And think they are more authentic.'

[2] I write with the remembrance of an admirable production of this play at Manchester in 1872 by the late Mr. Charles Calvert, whose spirited and intelligent services to our national theatre should not be forgotten.

[3] Ulrici.

Ideas of popular rights unfamiliar to Queen Elisabeth and her circle;

Yet, if the age had been fully awakened to such historical antipathies and sympathies as these, to one thing its most prominent representatives as yet turned a deaf ear; and this was the political progress of the people[3]. A deaf ear

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[1] King Henry can hardly forgive himself, but an English audience was doubtless fully prepared to forgive him, the boast:

> 'My people are with sickness much enfeebled;
> My numbers lessen'd; and those few I have
> *Almost no better than so many French.*' (Act iii. sc. 6.)

[2] Some agreement will be found in the views here indicated rather than developed with those advanced by a much-abused German critic of Shakspere, Gustav Rümelin, in his *Shakespearestudien* (1866). Whatever qualities this book may lack, I venture to think that it possesses the merit of common sense.

[3] 'For the rest,' as Grillparzer puts it (*Werke*, vol. x. p. 136), 'what is

—inasmuch as that age itself was already engaged in the beginnings of the struggle which its successors were to carry to an issue. Elisabeth, whose despotic sway was accepted by her nobles and extolled by her poets, regarded the great body of the population as children preserved by nature in a state of perpetual infancy. At the very outset of her reign, for instance, she failed to appreciate the difficulties which beset the endeavour to blend Catholics and Protestants in one national Church. She hated the disputes about dogmas; and all recalcitrance against uniformity was to her foolishness. Even towards the end of her reign, when Parliament grew restive, when it was no longer possible to mistake the fact that a movement towards independence in thought and life was manifesting itself in Church and State, when, in other words, Puritanism and Democracy began to manifest their existence as living ideas, she failed to perceive their significance for the future; and if they disturbed her tranquillity, it seems to have been chiefly to the extent of affecting her temper. The poets of Elisabeth's reign, and the greatest of them among the rest, were no political seers. Nothing could be more absurd than to demand of them that they should have been such. To quarrel with Shakspere's *King John* because it shows no perception of the significance, in its connexion with the political system of the Tudors, of *Magna Charta;* or to miss in *Henry VIII* a recognition of the political significance of Henry's Reformation, is to trifle with the necessary limits of the dramatist's art. The exercise of an insight into such things as these was foreign to his sphere of literature, though it has not unfrequently found its opportunities there. Moreover, the circumstances of his career were unlikely to suggest to him the application of his powers to the expression of political thought. Those classes in which the new ideas were mainly at work, and through whose efforts they were in the end to prove victorious, were not the classes with which the dramatist was brought into vital contact. The supreme endeavours of

and to Shakspere.

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history? Is it possible to mention the character of any one historical personage as to which historians are at one? The historian knows very little; the poet ought to know everything.'

London Puritanism in Shakspere's eyes lay in the warfare carried on by the City authorities against the theatres; and in these attempts, though his natural dignity led him to abstain from meeting them, after the fashion of some of his fellow-dramatists, by vulgar and abusive retorts, he could not be expected to see more than an oppressive desire to carry out rigid notions of public order. The anti-Puritan feeling of Shakspere shows itself (apart from isolated passages, one of which, in *Henry VIII*, may not be from his hand) most characteristically in the characters of Angelo and of Malvolio, each of which is quite differently conceived, in accordance with their respective surroundings. Broad views and enthusiastic forecasts as to the future developement of popular claims and popular rights were as rare in the historical authorities to which Shakspere had access as they were unfamiliar to the regions of society in which he moved and lived. Nor was it merely want of historical insight—or indifference to the use of it—which caused Shakspere's habitual attitude to what may be called the principles of the Revolution; for it cannot for a moment be denied that, in the words of a writer of much acuteness as well as of extensive research, 'there was a political attitude in Shakspere's mind, which in the days of Elisabeth led him into opposition [1].' Only, the term 'opposition' must not be allowed too pregnant a significance in its application to the reign in question. Shakspere was, alike by the conditions of his career and the tendencies of his temperament, a follower of the nobility and an admirer of traditions to which its actual power and importance as an order but imperfectly responded in Elisabeth's reign. The evidence of the decadence of the nobility, traceable in the consequences of individual excess or failure, appears to affect Shakspere more strongly than the historic traces, not that he is blind to these, of the growth of the popular power; although he remains a son of the people, and as a writer betrays no ulterior aspirations, his 'standpoint' of sympathy resembles that of a Tacitus or a Saint Simon. At the same time, the personal element must not be left out of the calculation. It is impossible to show that Shakspere approved of the essentially selfish motives and purposes of Essex's plot ; of his sympathy, however, not only with the chief figure in the futile attempt, but also with the protest involved in it against the repression of aristocratic self-assertion, no doubt can reasonably be entertained. For the rest, Shakspere cannot be held to have entered seriously into the conception of popular rights, as derived from ancient conceptions of citizenship—for the broader theories familiar to later times would to him have seemed little more than an ideal of the imagination. As to his having founded the conclusions of a political philosopher upon the typical lessons conveyed by the constitutional struggles of ancient Rome—this is an inference which I confess myself unable to draw from *Coriolanus*[1], the most important historical tragedy of his last period of productivity. Plutarch, the author whom Shakspere mainly, if not altogether, followed in these Roman tragedies, has been well described as owing a popularity of unparalleled endurance 'first and chiefly to the clear insight which he had into the distinction between History which he did *not* write, and Biography which he *did*[2].' Shakspere's Roman plays seem to me, like the immortal *Lives* on which they were founded, essentially heroic in their conception and design. But all sympathies with individual character, all appreciation or admiration of particular aim or effort, were in the politics, as forming part of the ethics, of Shakspere, controlled by his deference to the principle of law and order, not as imposed by force, but as freely acknowledged and accepted for the sake, and in the interest, of concord. The *locus classicus* as to the expression of this homage is the speech of Ulysses in *Troilus and Cressida*[1]; but his writings abound in indications of the same sentiment.

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[1] See R. Simpson, *The Politics of Shakspere's Historical Plays*, in *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1874.

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[1] 'Its chief object is to illustrate the struggle of democracy and aristocracy as the conflicting *principles* of a republican polity.' . . . 'The first of these two cycles brings before us the political history of the Roman people, the original of the modern European polity, in all its most essential moments' (Ulrici).—The blunter statement of F. A. Leo, *Shakespeare, das Volk und die Narren*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xv, 1880, possibly approaches more nearly to fact: 'Aristocracy and culture, democracy and stolid ignorance—such was the signature of the times. Shakespeare could draw no people, because he was acquainted only with a *plebs*.'

[2] Archbishop Trench, *Plutarch*, &c., p. 33.

Although, then, Shakspere stood so near to the age of the Revolution, its imminence conveyed no premonition to his poetic genius. And if herein he showed himself to be no prophet, neither was the great Queen such, most observant albeit of sovereigns—nor even the quick-witted Ralegh, nor the great thinker, who, like Shakspere and unlike Ralegh, succeeded—at least for a time—in harmonising the conduct of his personal career with the changes consequent upon the actual close of her reign.

Shakspere's view of national history concentrated in the reign of Elisabeth.

For the great Revolution which awaited the nation was unmistakeably hastened by the advent to the throne of a dynasty no longer in sympathy with the great currents of popular feeling that had animated the period of Shakspere's youth and earlier manhood. No traces are discoverable of any perception on his part of the changes to which the death of Elisabeth and the accession of James formed contributory incidents. There is doubtless an allusion to the latter event in *Macbeth*, but none to its significance. And, whether or not the lines at the close of *Henry VIII* be from Shakspere's own hand, at all events this, the last of his English historical dramas, fitly concludes with a tribute to Elisabeth and the Elisabethan age in comparison with which the appended compliments to the new sovereign, however skilfully devised, sink into insignificance. Thus it was the Elisabethan age proper which, in so far as the creative activity of Shakspere's genius was subject to the influence of his times, chiefly inspired his views of the national life—the age in which there had been 'no day without a deed to crown it,' the season of joyous and youthful energy, not extinct even in the last years of the aged Queen. When it drew to a close, Shakspere was himself still in the full vigour of his manhood; he was to live to accomplish many of his greatest works; but he had already come to recognise where lay the height of the task which it was in his power to accomplish. For, from the Histories, which he had brought to a perfection never before or since even attempted in that singular and purely English form of the drama, he had turned to creations even wider in their scope, and demanding from posterity an unstinted reverence for the prophet as manifested in the poet.

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[1] Cf. Mr. Lecky's *Democracy and Liberty* (1896), vol. i. p. 16 and *note*: 'It is curious to notice how deeply rooted the English sentiment of the necessity to well-ordered freedom of disparities of political power has been, even at the time when parliamentary government was in its infancy. No one has expressed this feeling better than Shakespeare' (in the passage cited in the text).—There is a considerable distance between such political philosophy as this, and the argument of Marlowe's hero (*Tamburlaine*, act ii. sc. 7):

> 'So now it [the crown] is more surer on my head
> Than if the gods had held a Parliament,
> And all pronounced me King of Persia.'

The classification of Shakspere's plays.

Schlegel pointed out, and many critics of inferior power have contentedly fallen back on the discovery, that any attempt to classify the plays of Shakspere in distinct series of species must necessarily halt. In *Hamlet* Shakspere himself ridicules the pedantry of attempting to establish divisions and subdivisions of the drama so as to provide a pigeon-hole for every sort of play; while in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* he even derides the undeniably satisfactory definition of a tragic action as one which ends unhappily:

> 'And tragical, my noble lord, it is;
> For Pyramus therein doth kill himself.'

Yet it is undoubtedly both lawful and convenient to adhere to the main divisions of histories, tragedies, and comedies under which his plays were arranged in the first collective edition, so long as the transitions, and, so to speak, the intersections, between the several species, are not ignored. It must never be forgotten that Shakspere's reminiscences of the history of the English stage, as might easily be shown from passages quite incidental in character, go back to both mysteries and moralities[1]; so that he cannot but have been very conscious of the entire measure of the advance in every phase of which he had so conspicuous a share. Something has been said in the preceding pages as to the first of these divisions, although from a particular point of view only. Shakspere's Roman tragedies (among which of course *The Noble Roman Historie of Titus Andronicus* is not to be included), while following Plutarch's *Lives* with a fidelity not inferior to that with which the English *Histories* follow Holinshed, even more clearly impress the great artistic lesson of the true dramatic treatment of historic themes. For in the English *Histories*, notwithstanding a freedom of treatment at times very striking, national predilections and prejudices remain in a manner sacred to the national dramatist. While, therefore, the heroic grandeur and the black infamy of particular familiar figures in our English annals had to be left undiminished, the murder of Caesar might be palliated and the moral impotence of Mark Antony might claim its human excuse. Thus Shakspere's Roman tragedies, whose action, however faithfully it may adhere in details to the authority followed, is moulded in its principal features by the poet's own art, became in a pre-eminent degree the models of the later historical drama.

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[1] Cf. the frequent allusions to Herod of Jewry, and other familiar remembrances of the Coventry mysteries. Moralities Shakspere doubtless saw in London. Cf. *Richard III*, act iii. sc. 1:

> 'Thus, like the formal Vice, Iniquity,
> I moralise two meanings in one word.'

His Histories;

his Roman tragedies:

Herein, however, these tragedies on ancient Roman themes but shared a responsibility (if I may use the phrase) entailed upon his tragedies on other subjects, which naturally admitted of a more absolute freedom of dramatic treatment, and which, so far as the experience of literature has since gone, have enduringly become the unequalled examples of the most moving and awful—of what Aristotle called the most tragic—kind of tragedy. Where else are depicted with the same breadth and intensity the struggle between will and obstacle—whether that obstacle lie outside the human agent as in Romeo, or within him as in Hamlet—or the conflict between character and surroundings,—the generous heart of Othello poisoned by the whisper of suspicion, the chaste soul of the heroine of *Measure for Measure* yielding to the temptations of affection and pity? Where can we find mirrored with a similar truthfulness, and at the same time with a like many-sidedness of expression, the operation of those passions by which, but for the Eternal

his other tragedies.

Mercy, man might seem doomed to be mastered? We may smile at the analytic fever of critics intent upon representing Shakspere as a kind of dramatic Theophrastus, whose aim—only in a measure of fulness unapproached either by Theophrastus himself or his many followers in the seventeenth or in any other century—it was to delineate *seriatim* the effects upon the human mind of the chief of the passions that lay siege to it,—ambition, jealousy, and their fell sisterhood. But for such arguings this excuse at least may be pleaded, that as a tragic dramatist Shakspere, when his magic garment is on, actually seems to have under his sway the whole wide sea of human nature, agitated by a commotion wilder and more furious than that which filled the mariners with terror, and Miranda's gentle heart with pity for the victims of the tempest. What Shakspere sees in human nature and human struggles, he sees as it is. Instinctively—I will not say unconsciously, for the act of creation implies a lofty satisfaction which can hardly be conceived as devoid of consciousness—he threw open to modern tragedy a range of treatment hitherto unreached in breadth or depth or height, and set the national drama in its noblest forms free from restrictions to which it could not submit anew without a sense of having renounced its enfranchisement.

Shakspere's comedies.

But, while the dramatic genius of Shakspere asserts itself with the most overwhelming power in his Tragedies, it is by means of his Comedies, if we still follow the nomenclature of the editors of the First Folio, that he more especially attained to an indisputable pre-eminence among the poets, not only of the English, but of the modern romantic drama at large. By way of illustrating the meaning of such an assertion, it may be permissible to review very briefly this branch of Shakspere's achievements as a dramatist, without going back either upon researches as to the sources of his comedies, or upon ascertained facts or speculations as to their relative chronological sequence. Certain broad distinctions may be maintainable among the plays included in the wonderfully varied group in question, which are not necessarily coincident with the considerations as to origin of subject or date of production.

Thus, *The Comedy of Errors* and *The Taming of the Shrew*, though probably more or less distant from one another in date, and in a very different measure respectively composite in origin, may be alike described as substantially adaptations or revisions of earlier plays. The subject of neither of these comedies was recast by Shakspere in a mould shaped by his own genius; and it would be futile to seek in either for evidence of real significance as to his conception of the actual or possible sphere of comedy.

Those not really original here omitted from consideration.

Love's Labour's Lost, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and, with a difference to be immediately noted, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, bear the marks of a relatively early origin, and of an unmistakeable cognateness in the sources of their themes. They were, moreover, alike composed under the influence of Lyly, which reveals itself to some extent in the polished and witty dialogue, and more so in fanciful action full of allusions, at times open and at other times veiled, to contemporary incidents and situations. The influence of a prevalent demand, of which historical and literary research are only beginning to gauge the force, for 'topical' treatment of dramatic themes, and of which Lyly was probably a follower rather than the creator, is likewise discernible in these plays. At the same time, the humorous characters of *Love's Labour's Lost* are in part unmistakeable reproductions of favourite types of Italian comedy; and the delicate texture of this play, not obscured even by the crudities of form in which it abounds, must have been essentially new to the existing English stage. *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* exhibits similar features of workmanship; but the species of comedy of which these two plays may be regarded as furnishing the earliest signal examples on the English stage, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* attains to a consummation which it had never before reached, either in our own, or in any other, dramatic literature. English romantic comedy, in a word, was now represented by an example, not of sudden (for nothing is sudden in literature), but of radiant perfection [1].

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[1] Cf. Symonds, *Shakspere's Predecessors*, p. 532. Collier, vol. ii. p. 335, has some very interesting observations on the evidence as to the early

Origin of romantic comedy.

The foreign growth which had exercised a most important influence upon the origin of English romantic comedy, without determining its ultimate developement, had sprung up on Italian soil. The whole history of Italian culture from the Renascence period onwards, under its social as well as its more special literary aspect, exhibits a remarkably intimate co-operation of two activities which, for want of more precise names, may perhaps be designated as the academical and the popular. In French literature, these two elements ceased to co-operate in anything like the same measure after the Renascence period; and to this day French dramatic literature in particular, notwithstanding the signally favourable conditions under which it has continued to flourish, has not succeeded in thoroughly reuniting them. In Italy, however, it was the popular element which, as has been seen, produced the earliest efforts of the native drama, and which in the end gave rise to a dramatic form destined to survive the gradual decline of the dramatic growths derived from purely literary sources. Italian tragedy and comedy had their day, and have experienced periodical revivals; the hybrid species of the pastoral drama has flourished and has faded; the opera, which has summoned more than one sister-art to its aid, is a later, and has proved a more long-lived, variety. But the one dramatic form which has maintained itself from first to last is wholly popular in its origin.

The commedia dell' arte *in its later developement*

In the middle of the sixteenth century the Italian *commedia dell' arte*, while it had contrived to preserve the characteristics of its popular origin, was at the same time largely under the influence of the Academies which were the chief representatives of the still active Renascence movement. In this quite peculiar epoch of its history, when its established figures had been elaborated with constant care, and when at the same time a courtly and

existence of efforts in the direction of English romantic comedy. I say, *in the direction*, for apart from all controversies as to the personal intention of the famous passage in Spenser's *Teares of the Muses* referring to the obscured efforts of the earlier 'comic stage,' it seems to me that ideals rather than achievements inspired the beautiful lines of the poetic critic—ideals which he had perhaps himself sought to realise.

a presumable influence.

even learned tone had been given to some of its productions by the Academies, the English dramatists, and Shakspere among them, came in contact with this growth. The Italian actors who visited England about this time excited astonishment and admiration by the rapidity of their improvisations, but a special instructiveness must have been found in the variety of effect which they were able to create with a series of personages so far fixed as to preclude deeper characterisation[1]. With certain of the regular comedies of the Italian stage it is highly probable that Shakspere had in addition become acquainted, whether at second or at first hand matters little; and a considerable proportion of the literature of Italian prose-fiction was in one way or another open to him. But the wish which he must have entertained to satisfy the craving of his public for incident, and his observation of the lightness and ease with which the *commedia dell' arte* treated character, cannot but have largely helped to lead him to a species of comedy new to English, and indeed to any, dramatic literature.

Shakspere's romantic comedy essentially a comedy of incident.

These speculations may appear far-fetched: but whether or not they supply the requisite key, supposing any key to be called for, they illustrate the particular aspect to which I desire to refer in discussing this species of Shaksperean comedy[2]. This species is essentially a comedy of *incident*, although of course the element of character is not absent from it. There can be no pedantry in adopting a distinction which, whether applied to comedy or to prose-fiction, is legitimate, so long as it is not forced beyond reasonable limits. Incident, character, and manners give their names severally to those kinds of comedy in which, according to the conception of the author, any one of these elements predominates. Comedy of character most thoroughly fulfils the purpose which all comedy seeks to accomplish, because it advances towards that end more directly than comedy of incident, while moving in a both higher and wider sphere than comedy of manners. Hence we may recognise as the most perfect types of comedy those which with incomparable felicity exhibit the lasting types of ridiculous humanity, such as the litigious old gentleman in *The Wasps* or the unctuous hypocrite in *Tartuffe.* Now, of comedies of character in the stricter sense of the term it is not easy to find distinct examples among Shakspere's purely comic dramas, unless it be *The Merry Wives* or *The Taming of the Shrew*; but in the former of these the main character was given at the outset (whatever may be the truth of the apocryphal anecdote that the play was written to order), while the latter play was not original. Eminent critics have sought to tabulate Shakspere's comedies in general as comedies of character. In each they have been anxious to find a central character;—as Molière devoted one play to the Hypocrite, another to the Miser, a third to the Misanthrope, so it has been declared that Shakspere designed in his comedies to offer a gallery of various human types. These critics appear to have been deceived by the supposed analogy of the tragedies. It is impossible to read a tragedy of Shakspere (I do not include all the Histories under this term), or to see it represented on the stage, without feeling that its interest is centred in its hero. Popular instinct has given expression to this truism by converting into a proverbial saying the jest as to the performance of *Hamlet* with the part of Hamlet left out. *Romeo and Juliet* is the tragedy of impassioned devotion; its interest concentrates itself in the two characters which give their name to the play; no other personage is essential to it. *Othello* is the tragedy of the lover's jealousy; *Richard III* of ruthless ambition; *Macbeth* of moral weakness under temptations allying themselves with noble impulses as well as with superstitious fancies. And so forth. The comedies, on the other hand, as a rule contain no single personage in whom the interest absolutely centres; and it would be difficult to name one of them in which the attention of reader or spectator is not competitively engaged by at least two parallel actions.

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[1] Cf. Burckhardt, *Die Cultur der Renaissance in Italien*, p. 253; and see Klein, iv. 217. Thomas Heywood, in his *Apology for Actors* (*Old Shakespeare Society's Publications*, 1843), bk ii, proposes to 'omit all the doctors, zawnyes, pantaloons, harlakeenes, in which the French, but especially the Italians, have become excellent.' The power of improvisation of the Italian actors seems to be alluded to in *Antony and Cleopatra*, act v. sc. 2:

'. . . the quick comedians
Extemporally will stage us, and present
Our Alexandrian revels.'

[2] See some remarks on this subject in an able work by C. Humbert, *Molière, Shakspeare und die deutsche Kritik* (1869).

That Shakspere's comedies are not comedies of manners, is a statement which seems self-evident. Many of them, of course, contain an element of manners, introduced with so masterly an ease and power as to leave no doubt but that, had Shakspere chosen, he might have excelled in this inferior branch of the art. As an entire play, *The Merry Wives* alone approaches the species; but its distinctive element is recognisable in *Twelfth Night* and in many other Shaksperean comedies.

Nature of the incident.

In the main, then, although in no sense exclusively, the great dramatist's comedies are to be described as comedies of incident. In other words, their main interest lies not in the characters which their action developes, or in the manners which it furnishes opportunity for depicting, but in the story of the action itself. The incident to be found in these comedies is, however, of a peculiar kind; and here we arrive at a distinctive characteristic of our poet, the origin of which is due to the creative power of his genius. His comedies are *romantic* in the broadest sense of the term; *i e.*, they treat of subjects far removed from the ordinary course of human experience, and familiar only to spheres in which the genius of the dramatic poet alone can make other minds at home like his own. The conditions of each dramatic action are thus taken out of the control of moral or even social laws of cause and consequence, although the art of the poet wins our sympathy for the personages by whom that action is conducted[1].

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[1] Cf. the observations of Guizot (cited *ap.* Humbert, *u.s.*, p. 278):

'Shakspere's comedy is a fantastic and romantic work of the mind, a refuge for all those delightful improbabilities, which from indolence or whim fancy merely strings together by a thin thread, in order thence to construct a variety of manifold complications, exhilarating and interesting us, without precisely satisfying the judicial test of reason. Pleasing pictures, surprises, merry plots, curiosity stimulated, expectations deceived, mistakes of identity, witty problems entailing disguises,—such were the materials of these plays, innocent in themselves and lightly thrown together. —What wonder that Shakspere's youthful and brilliant power of imagination

The names of Shakspere's comedies indicative of their nature.

This difference between the dramatist's intention in his tragedies and comedies respectively, is very clearly indicated by the titles which he gave to them, and the exception noticeable in the instance of a play so composite in its elements of dramatic effect as *The Merchant of Venice* may perhaps be held to prove the rule. Nothing could be more futile than to search for a deep meaning in the titles lightly bestowed, from personal whim or for playhouse purposes, upon these romantic comedies. Again and again Shakspere takes a story upon which he has lighted in some Italian novel or in its French or English version, combining it most usually with one or more other stories from similar sources. As with marvellous, although not infallible, dramaturgic skill he developes the action of his play, its personages frequently, though not always, become lifelike realities in his hands ; the wondrous union of reading, fancy, humour, and wit is rapidly consummated ; and then the result is christened by a pleasant name—*All's Well that Ends Well*, *As You Like It*, *What You Will*, *The Winter's Tale*. He adopted or invented no pregnant phrases as titles for his tragedies, after the fashion of some of his brother-dramatists, such as Thomas Heywood ; and still less sought, like Ben Jonson, to distil the essence of his comedies into their designations ; yet what more appropriate than the plainness of his procedure in the one case, and in the other his airy freedom from embarrassment ?

A single example will suffice to illustrate my meaning.

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loved to dwell on such materials as these ; since by means of them it could, free from the severe yoke of reason, at the expense of probability produce all manner of serious and strong effects.—Shakspere was able to pour everything into his comedies ; and he actually poured everything into them, with the exception of what was irreconcileable with their system, *viz.* the logical connexion which subordinates every part of the piece to the purpose of the whole, and in each detail attests the depth, greatness, and unity of the work. In Shakspere's tragedies hardly a single conception, situation, deed of passion, degree of vice or of virtue, will be found that does not recur in some one of his comedies ; but what in the former reaches into the most abysmal depth, and shows itself productive of consequences of the most moving force, rigorously occupying its place in a series of causes and results, in the latter is barely suggested, being merely thrown out for the moment, so as to produce a fugitive impression, and to be merged with equal rapidity in a new complication.'

A Midsummer Night's Dream *as an example of Shakspere's romantic comedy.*

In which of Shakspere's comedies has he more thoroughly compassed the end of all dramatic and literary art, than in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; which other of his comedies has given delight so abundant and so perennial in the closet or on the stage? Apart from its beauties of diction—in the dialogue as well as in the lyrical passages—what is the source of its dramatic effectiveness? Is this to be sought either wholly or mainly in its characters? The marriage of Theseus and Hippolyta is, so to speak, the occasion of the action of the piece (to which some commentators have accordingly ascribed a festive design). In these personages nothing is notable but the pleasant dignity of Duke and Duchess. The figure of Egeus again, the afflicted father of Hermia, is slightly drawn; and between the two pairs of lovers, Lysander and Hermia, Demetrius and Helena, distinctions and differences exist indeed, but are only very lightly indicated; the poet's intention manifestly was, not to mark the effect of the lovers' adventures upon their characters, but merely to produce a group of personages suitable for carrying out his eccentric plot. Next, we have the delectable company of tradesmen whose study and performance of the tragedy of Pyramus and Thisbe furnish forth the anti-masque. Surely, no serious criticism can see in these bubbles of a humorous fancy the embodiments of a deep design. The translation of Bottom invests him with a superior satirical importance, but with the situation comes to an end the humorous play of character, the opportunity for which Shakspere was certain not to neglect; and in the height of the fun which succeeds, characterisation becomes quite out of the question. Enough of realism is left in these 'mechanical' oddities to produce the designed effective contrast with the fairy world; but to suppose that Shakspere in these humorous creations intended to create types of character, is an imputation which, had it been known to him, might have caused him to stay his fantastic pen in a novel kind of wonderment[1].

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[1] There is a romantic style of criticism as well as of composition; but though both are delightful, neither, if it is to be really enjoyed, must be taken too seriously. Hazlitt's analysis of Bottom may serve as an example:—

'It has been observed that Shakespear's characters are constructed upon

Lastly, to face the fairy world itself, as it appears before us in Oberon and Titania, with Puck and the rest of the frolicsome company. A judicious critic[1] speaks of them as 'beings without the finer feelings and without morality. The effects of the confusion which they produce cause no mental impression in themselves. They are without a higher intellectuality: they never reflect: there is no

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deep physiological principles: and there is something in this play which looks very like it. Bottom the Weaver who takes the lead of

> "This crew of patches, rude mechanicals
> That work for bread upon the Athenian stalls"—

follows a sedentary trade, and he is accordingly represented as conceited, serious, and fantastical. He is ready to undertake anything and everything, as if it was as much a matter of course as the motion of his loom and shuttle. He is for playing the tyrant, the lover, the lady, the lion. "He will roar that it shall do any man's heart good to hear him;" and this being objected to as improper, he still has a resource in his good opinion of himself, and will "roar you an't were any nightingale." Snug the Joiner is the moral man of the piece, who proceeds by measurement and discretion in all things. You see him with his rule and compass in his hand. "Have you the lion's part written? Pray you, if it be, give it me, for I am slow of study." "You may do it extempore," says Quince, "for it is nothing but roaring." Starveling the Tailor keeps the peace, and objects to the lion and the drawn sword. "I believe we must leave the killing out when all's done." Starveling, however, does not start the objections himself, but seconds them when made by others, as if he had not spirit to express his fears without encouragement. *It is too much to suppose all this intentional; but it very luckily falls out so.* Nature includes all that is implied in the most subtle analytical distinctions; and the same distinctions will be found in Shakespear. Bottom, who is not only chief actor, but stage-manager for the occasion, has a device to obviate the danger of frightening the ladies. "Write me a prologue, and let the prologue seem to say, we will do no harm with our swords, and that Pyramus is not killed indeed; and for better assurance, tell them that I, Pyramus, am not Pyramus, but Bottom the Weaver; this will put them out of fear." Bottom seems to have understood the subject of dramatic illusion at least as well as any modern essayist. If our holiday mechanic rules the roast among his fellows, he is no less at home in his new character of an ass "with amiable cheeks, and fair long ears." He instinctively acquires a most learned taste, and grows fastidious in the choice of dried peas and bottled hay. He is quite familiar with his new attendants, and assigns them their part with all due gravity. "Monsieur Cobweb, good Monsieur, get your weapon in your hand, and kill me a redhipt humble-bee on the top of a thistle, and, good Monsieur, bring me your honeybag,"' &c.

The late Mr. Phelps' inimitable representation of Bottom the Weaver was based on some such conception of the character, and to my mind, although magnificent, was not Shakspere.

[1] Gervinus.

trace in them either of contemplation, or of the expression of a sentiment. They are without the higher intellectual capacities of human nature. Their joy is to couch in flowers, while the wings of butterflies fan them to rest. Their thoughts are merely directed towards the physical. Their sympathies are with butterflies and nightingales; it is upon hedgehogs, toads, and bats that they make war; their chief delights are dance, music, and song. It is only the sense of the Beautiful which elevates them above mere animal life.' Accepting this analysis, and acknowledging that the few incidents which occur within the sphere of the fairy crew neither produce, nor are intended to produce, any moral effect whatever,—what must be allowed to be the result? The whole *dramatis personae* of this play, the mainly conventional figures of the Duke and Duchess and the pairs of lovers, the realistic oddities of the jubilee tradesmen, and the fanciful impossibilities of the fairy court, stand confessed as a machinery—devised no doubt with extraordinary wit and skill—for sustaining the interest of the action. The whole play remains in substance a romantic comedy of incident; and the fancy is the faculty mainly engaged in enjoying it.

Later examples.

The same remark may, by way of illustration, be applied to one of Shakspere's latest plays, where, in this respect, he returned to his earlier method. In *The Winter's Tale* delineation of character as affected by the progress of the action is not the primary object of the comedy, and its characterisation is accordingly upon the whole the reverse of deep. Yet Gervinus and with him other critics call upon us to recognise in it a comedy of character; in Leontes, the jealous King, we are asked to see a counterpart of Othello. The Moor's, we are reminded, is a noble and confiding spirit; it is only the terrible fatality of his situation and the diabolical craft of his enemy which evoke the monster of jealousy in his mind. Leontes', on the other hand, is an intrinsically suspicious nature, whose master-tendency is to think itself always in the right and the rest of the world in the wrong. Undoubtedly his conduct towards his wife requires dramatic explanation; but has the poet psychologically explained it, and can the most careful actor make this character in itself satisfactory[1]? The improbable nature of the story of the play, which adds to its charm as a mere story, necessitated irrational conduct on the part of Leontes; and irrational his conduct remains,—some divinity made him mad, and some divinity heals him. But can this kind of characterisation be compared to that of Othello?

Comedies of a mixed species.

From the particular species of dramatic creation to which he afterwards incidentally recurred Shakspere had meanwhile proceeded to other dramatic forms; but even in works which may in part be ascribed to his maturer years, though still to a comparatively youthful period of his life, something of the method of his earlier comedies is to be found in combination with deeper purposes worked out by wider processes. In *The Merchant of Venice* the story of the caskets is a mere romantic tale, fraught indeed with a moral, but with no very weighty one; the characters concerned in it are, in part at least, mere shadows; no reality attaches to Morocco or to Aragon. The story of the Jew is, in its original conception, equally a romantic fancy, though embodying a moral lesson; but here Shakspere has made incident subservient to character, developing the latter with the utmost force, so that Shylock becomes not less distinct and memorable than the hero of any of the tragedies. So again, in a different way, in *Twelfth Night*, where the comic figures include types both of manners and of character, and where the story (the same which had, speaking comparatively, been treated so slightly in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*) enables the dramatist to draw in Viola a character of all but tragic pathos.

The element of character never absent.

But upon the works which display the dramatic genius of Shakspere in its fulness I refrain from adding any further remarks in this place. Even to what little has been said the proverbial grain of salt will be considerately added. The dramatic power of Shakspere's genius manifests itself in all his plays—whether in his romantic comedies woven in their original conception out of fancies light as air, or in the tragedies of passion and force carved out of the solid marble of historical tradition. He saw character in everything; and in all his dramatic works gave expression to this perception. In *As You Like It*, *e.g.*, he peoples the fanciful realm of a sylvan solitude with characters of the directest human truthfulness; there is reality in the melancholy of Jaques, and in the foolery of Touchstone. Yet it seems noteworthy, that in those comedies which, belonging to Shakspere's earlier period, are near to the romantic type proper, characterisation is introduced incidentally rather than as forming part of the design of the play, and begins and leaves off in quick obedience to the poet's fancy. The design being to carry the spectator far away from the real world of human life, no necessity intervened for seeking to exemplify the moral laws by which that life is ruled. But so happily was knowledge of human nature united in Shakspere to the most vivid force of imagination, so truthfully was he described by Pope as not more a master of our strongest emotions than of our idlest sensations, that no creation of his, into whatever regions and to whatever distance it strayed or soared, lost its intimate connexion with living humanity[1].

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[1] So at least it seemed to me, when renewing my acquaintance with *The Winter's Tale* as an acted play, and retaining at the same time a very lively remembrance of the late Mr. Charles Kean's Leontes.

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[1] A familiar illustration of this might be traced in the Fools and Clowns of Shakspere, had this subject not been so fully treated by competent hands. Nothing could in its origin be more abstract than this class of character. See Douce's *Illustrations of Shakespeare* (new edn., 1839); and cf. J. Thümmel, *Über Shakespeare's Narren*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. ix, 1874, and *Über Shakespeare's Clowns*, *ib.*, vol. xi, 1876. The Fool of the Elisabethan drama was the last representative of that figure of mere negation, the Vice of the moralities. The Fool had not necessarily any more real connexion with the plot of a play than his namesake at Court or in a nobleman's house had with the State or family counsels which he had the privilege of subjecting to his perennial flow of criticism. Yet with how wonderful a skill is a place found for this hybrid element, half in and half out of the action in a wide variety of Shakspere's plays! In *King Lear* the Fool takes an integral part in the action, naturally representing the last remnant of the following of the ill-used King. In *As You Like It*, *Twelfth Night*, *&c.*, we again have the Fools proper, fulfilling their function which, according to Coleridge's expression, in some measure is that of the ancient Chorus, but which may be more directly defined as that of ironical commentators on the regular actors of the comedy of human life. But not one of Shakspere's Fools—and hardly one of his Clowns—fails to reveal something at least of a human individuality of his own. It would prolong this note unwarrantably to seek to follow out in it an interesting line of enquiry concerning the transitions from the agents and the conductors of everlasting mirth, Fool and Clown, to such consummate types of comic humanity as Falstaff on the one hand, and Dogberry or Trinculo on the other.

At last, in *The Tempest*, the comedy of romantic incident was blended, as it never has been before or since, with typical characterisation of the profoundest kind.

Shakspere's services to the progress of the English drama.

In conclusion, a few words may be added on an aspect of Shakspere's achievements most directly calling for consideration in its relation to the general plan of the present survey—viz. his services to the actual progress of the English drama. Whithersoever this particular enquiry may turn, the advance effected by his labours upon those of his predecessors is alike indisputable. Yet it is not in every direction alike extraordinary, or, in other words, alike attributable to the overpowering originality of his genius.

His dramatic diction.

Thus, in view of the energies expended by his age upon dramatic literature, and of the signally important advances effected before Shakspere's influence as an original dramatist can be fairly held to have made itself felt, the progress achieved during his age and with his co-operation in the mere outward form of dramatic literature is not to be attributed to him alone, or even to him mainly. As to *diction*, nearly all the Elisabethan dramatists display the varied capabilities of the English tongue more fully than Spenser or any other English non-dramatic writer of this age, because of the distinctive conditions under which the dramatists composed their works. Nowhere except on a popular stage, patronised at the same time by the cultivated circles of the Court and the young nobility, could a diction have been formed which satisfied the demands of classes of hearers so widely different from one another. In preserving the English drama from the twofold danger of being narrowed into an amusement for an exclusive class (such as it remained in the hands of the authors of *Gorboduc* or of Lyly), or of sinking into a favourite sport of the lower orders of the population, Shakspere and his contemporaries simultaneously elevated and popularised the literary English language inherited by them. They saved it from following an archaising tendency, such as is observable, not only in Spenser's most important earlier work, but also in his masterpiece. Where archaisms occur in Shakspere they are not, like Spenser's, purposely introduced in order to impart to the diction a peculiar, quasi-mystic colouring; rather, they are, like the archaisms of the Authorised Version, clung to by the poet because they had been clung to by the people at large. The people had its old saws, its snatches of wit or wisdom in prose or verse, its proverbs and proverbial expressions, its favourite mottoes, devices, and emblems; and of all these the popular drama, and Shakspere in particular, made frequent use, as certain to command immediate popular approval and applause. It is of course more especially in the comic scenes or passages of Shakspere that we must look for archaisms of this description. His Fools and Clowns, whose wit and fun appeal directly to the understanding of the groundlings,—besides at times concealing a wisdom of real depth or a true insight into character,—frequently indulge in such reminiscences[1]. With this deduction, then, and that of passages where Shakspere more or less consciously imitated the 'high-astounding terms' or the antithetical phraseology of particular models to whose influence his early dramatic labours were unmistakeably subject, his diction is a fair and full representative of Elisabethan English; neither vulgarised, on the one hand, to suit the ears of the lower classes, nor, on the other, either archaistically coloured like Spenser's, or 'Italianated' like that of Greene and other prose-writers, or Latinised like that of Bacon[2].

It was of infinite importance, both for the progress of our dramatic literature and for that of the language at large, that this result should have been achieved; but it was not achieved by Shakspere independently of his brother dramatists. But for the influence of the stage, the Elisabethan period of our language would hold a far less definitive position than it actually occupies in the general history of the progress of our tongue: whose native Germanic genius would have been exposed to serious dangers from the classicism of the Renascence movement. Conversely, had not the genius of Shakspere and, in a less degree, that of his fellow-dramatists contributed to elevate the popular stage, where it was natural and necessary largely to employ popular diction, the body of our dramatic literature would, like that of more than one modern nation, have remained literature in little more than name.

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[1] Thus, to take only one example, how many archaisms of form, how many obsolete words or forms of words, how many instances of lost flexion are to be found in the scraps which the Fool in *King Lear* throws at 'nuncle'!

[2] Provincialisms may possibly be here and there discoverable in Shakspere's diction; but I have met with no convincing illustrations of the supposition.

His use of prose.

The use on the English stage of prose as a vehicle of expression entitled to equal rights with verse was, as has been seen, due to Lyly, though it had not been originally introduced by him. Shakspere, together with most of his contemporaries among our dramatists, was evidently under the influence of Lyly's prose; but the limits within which he admitted its operation may be worth observing. In Shakspere's prose, as has been pointed out by Delius[1], three varieties may conveniently be distinguished. First, we have the speech of the clowns and their fellows, which in phraseology and construction is the speech of the people, and abounds in such reminiscences as those adverted to above. Secondly, we have the essentially euphuistic style, features of which are in Shakspere's earlier dramas at times undoubtedly introduced in order to ridicule it, but occur in his later plays 'without any such purpose and in full seriousness, where information is to be given to the spectators as to the nature of a situation, or where a specially solemn and ceremonious tone is intended[2].' Here, beyond doubt, Shakspere was consciously employing that elaborate species of phraseology and balanced cadence of speech, peculiar to the good society of his age, of which Lyly's style was the English prototype. Lastly, there is the humorous prose spoken as a rule (though not exclusively) by personages of superior rank or importance—the prose of high comedy, as one may venture to call it. Suggested in form by the dialogues of Lyly, these Shaksperean conversations—of which the wit-combats in *Much Ado about Nothing* furnish the most signal example—are very far from being essentially euphuistic; and in no branch of dramatic writing was the advance made by Shakspere more remarkable, while none of his Elisabethan contemporaries approached him in the combination of elegance, lightness, and point which he here displayed. With all his powers of observation and wit, Ben Jonson fell short of a similarly consummate success; Beaumont and Fletcher have been judged to have 'copied more faithfully than Shakspere the language of the Court and the Mall,' but the question is whether, so to speak, the company which they kept there was of the very best[1]. But I would rather cry a truce to comparisons in the matter. What seems incontrovertible is that the prose form of English high comedy has its first model in Shakspere.

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[1] See his very exhaustive essay *Die Prosa in Shakespeare's Dramen*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. v (1870).

[2] *E.g.*, *A Winter's Tale*, act v. sc. 2.

His versification.

His *versification*, and the results which in this respect he achieved for our dramatic literature, have been made the subject of far more extensive comment. On this head, however, the progress which he helped to effect was not, so far as we can judge, essentially determined by his particular writings. Nor was it entirely a progress to superior excellence of form, although signally tending in the direction of freedom. In the earlier plays—notably in *Love's Labour's Lost*—Shakspere's art as a versifier is still far from self-possessed; in the later—such as the Roman plays—the laws of metre are in some points relaxed with lofty licence. But while he thus at first falls short of, and then passes beyond, the norm observed in the plays of his middle period, such as *Twelfth Night* and *As You Like It*, the general currents of change observable in his versification are common to the whole Elisabethan drama. The practice of accommodating versification to syntax—stopping the line with the sentence or the clause—he derived from the ruling example of Marlowe; but Marlowe himself in his later dramas, although not of course to the same extent as Shakspere in his, abandoned a rigid adherence to the usage. The employment of rime was likewise already being narrowed when Shakspere began to write; but the strong lyrical element in his poetic individuality inspired him with a lingering affection towards it, especially in plays with a decidedly lyrical element in their conception, such as *Romeo and Juliet*. On the other hand, in the adoption of the use of double endings he followed the current of popular taste, though he never gave way to it to the same extent as Fletcher; whence above all the doubts as to the entirety of Shakspere's authorship of the play in which this practice is most conspicuous (*Henry VIII*). That, notwithstanding all this, the verse of Shakspere's dramas remains as a whole unrivalled, is due to the spontaneous flow of the well of poetry which was in him. We cannot think of him writing his verses, like Jonson, in the first instance in prose; for with Shakspere there can have never been an interval between the conception of a thought and the production of it in its appropriate poetic form. This is specially illustrated by the exquisite appropriateness of the lyrics introduced by him into his dramas, which are so true to the tone of a scene or situation[1]; but the same appropriateness is characteristic of his versification as a whole. He cannot be said to have discovered, but he certainly exemplified, with a fulness unequalled if not unapproached, the pliancy of the chosen metre of the English drama,—the marble flowed under his hands.

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[1] See W. B. Donne, *Essays on the Drama*, p. 60, where it is happily said that Hallam's suggestion that Beaumont and Fletcher represent the phrase and manners of the more polished circles more truly than their great contemporary 'may be granted when the Don Johns, Don Felixes, and Rutilios of those dramatists shall be shown to have excelled in conversation Orlando in Ardennes, Benedick at Messina, and Cassio in Cyprus.'

The construction of his plays.

The *construction* of Shakspere's plays has not always been regarded by critics as their strongest point; yet it is undoubtedly in this respect that he has exerted the most lasting influence upon the English drama as well as upon the modern drama of the Germanic nations in general[1]. It must not be forgotten that the conditions under which he constructed his plays were still the same as those already noted as common to the works of his immediate predecessors[2]. In the first place, the great and irresistible demand on the part of the public was for incident—a demand which of itself necessitated a method of construction different from that of the Greek drama. To no other reason is to be ascribed Shakspere's constant usage of combining two actions in a single play; and it is instructive to observe the advance which he gradually effected in the method of combination. In his adaptation of *The Taming of the Shrew* (Prelude and Interlude apart) the two actions have no organic connexion. In *The Merchant of Venice* they are, at an early point in the play, intertwined with admirable skill; although it must be left to misguided ingenuity to detect a psychological connexion between them. But how deftly are the complicated threads of the plot of *Twelfth Night* woven together; and how perfectly constructed is the action of *The Tempest*[3]!

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[1] I am quite aware that a much wider field of criticism is opened by the question as to Shakspere's extraordinary gift of meeting, often by wonderful effects of mixture or contrast, the demands of dramatic tone. On this and other heads of aesthetic criticism of Shakspere's dramatic work, see the remarkably acute work of Mr. R. G. Moulton, *Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist* (1885). As to the lyrical element in Shakspere's plays generally, see W. Steuerwald, *Lyrisches in Shakspere*, Munich, 1881; and cf. Delius, *Einlagen und Zuthaten zu Shakespeare's Dramen*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xxi, 1885. Dr. Furnivall's *List of all the Songs and Passages in Shakspere which have been set to Music* was revised by them for the *New Shakspere Society*, 1884.

The same demand, however, led to another danger, which in the case of Shakspere's very greatest efforts was perhaps heightened by that unequalled power of characterisation in which, taking all in all, we cannot but recognise the greatest of his dramatic qualities. The interest of the action depends to such a degree upon the hero, and by the time that the *climax* of the drama is reached the interest in the hero has been raised to such a height, that in order to supply the requisite amount of incident between climax and catastrophe, characters and scenes have to be introduced which at times tend to detract from the effect of the concluding portion of the drama. No instance is more illustrative of this than *Hamlet*, where no candid observer of theatrical effect can ignore the fall of interest in the last two acts of the tragedy; the same criticism, although not in the same measure, likewise applies to *King Lear*, to *Coriolanus*, and to other plays by Shakspere[1].

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[1] See G. Freytag, *Die Technik des Dramas*, pp. 157 *seqq.*

[2] *Ante*, vol. i. pp. 439 *seqq.*

[3] In his essay on *Polymythie in dramatischen Dichtungen Shakespeares*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xi, 1876, C. C. Hense contrasts with the 'monomythia' of the ancient (Greek) drama the 'polymythia' of the modern, which appears to mean multiplied action—the interweaving and contrasting of plots. Hense considers that Greene was the first who, though in defective fashion, essayed the 'polymythic' method.

Many details of Shaksperean construction are entirely owing to the external conditions of his stage, and need not be dwelt upon, particularly as in such respects a reasonable latitude should be allowed to the intelligence of a theatrical manager. But if as to construction Shakspere's plays be compared with those of his predecessors—with Marlowe's, for instance, or Peele's—the immense advance made by him will become apparent. The best-constructed of Marlowe's dramas is more episodical in arrangement than the earliest of Shakspere's *histories*, the arrangement of which, whatever may have been the actual origin of its component parts, may without hesitation be concluded to have been subject to independent control. Indeed, *Richard III* is a model of dramatic construction in the sustained power of its successive parts, and in its general symmetry.

'Aids to construction' employed by him:

In the same connexion, it may be worth while to point out how the use made by Shakspere of what may be called *aids to construction* constituted another striking advance upon the practice of his predecessors[2]. Several of the expedients in question were derived from the classical drama, where they were designed to meet a very different necessity, and where they accordingly filled a far more important place. Such were the use of the prologue and epilogue, in which may be included the appearance of prologising or epilogising ghosts, and that of the *Chorus*. An invention of the modern stage was the explanatory dumb-show. Shakspere, as is known, did not wholly eschew the use of these expedients, but where he employed them it was usually with a special felicity unnoticeable in any of his predecessors. The indirect result was that the merely perfunctory or matter-of-course employment of these expedients was either rendered obsolete, or became a sign of weakness rather than strength in those who resorted to them [1].

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[1] Cf. Freytag, p. 161: but the criticism is one to the truth of which I can bear witness from repeated personal experience. The example of *Henry V* might be added—but the conditions of a *history* manifestly stand on a footing of their own.

[2] See on this subject F. Lüders, *Prolog und Epilog bei Shakespeare*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. v (1870).

Chorus.

Of a *Chorus* the chief instance in Shakspere (leaving *Pericles* aside as a play probably not designed by him) is to be found in *Henry V*; but apart from the fact that this play is a *history*, and therefore lends itself to the introduction of a narrative element, the dramatist was manifestly anxious to efface by means of direct deprecation the difference between the grandeur of the events represented and the scale of their representation. Never have force and charm of descriptive commentary been employed with more consummate effect. The introduction of *Rumour* in the *Second Part* of *Henry IV* might perhaps have been dispensed with. The appearance of *Time* in *The Winter's Tale* is called for by the special necessity of spanning, in the interest of the audience, a wide interval of both time and place.

Prologues and Epilogues.

The *Prologues* and *Epilogues* proper generally vary according to the character of the plays which they introduce or conclude. So *Romeo and Juliet* is introduced by a sonnet, *Troilus and Cressida* by a Prologue 'arm'd [2].' The epilogue to *As You Like It* and the 'jig' concluding *Twelfth Night* likewise felicitously attach themselves to the plays which they respectively conclude. In a few of Shakspere's other plays indeed the epilogues are mere expansions of the Roman *Plaudite* [3]; but in the great majority of his later works Shakspere has avoided this species of appeal to the good-will of the public (or, as it became in Ben Jonson's hands, to the judgment of the discerning few). The solitary instance of a prologue which amounts to an exposition of both situation and character is to be found in *Richard III*, where it admirably corresponds to the design of the play.

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[1] Hamlet accordingly ridicules a prologue which merely asks the good-will of the spectators. On the other hand, Shakspere abstained from utilising prologue or epilogue, like Ben Jonson, 'whether against rival playwrights' (unless it were in *Henry VIII*), 'refractory players, or unsympathetic audiences.' See *A Study of the Prologue and Epilogue in English Literature from Shakespeare to Dryden*, by G. S. B., 1884, p. 45.)

[2] This may have been suggested by the 'armed' Prologue to Jonson's *Poetaster* (1601); though of course the significance is there a very different one. Jonson had taken the notion from the 'armed' Epilogus to the *First Part* of his adversary Marston's *Antonio and Mellida*.

[3] The Prologue to *Henry VIII* (which has been thought not to be by Shakspere) certainly partakes of the character of a manager's address to a public as to whose temper he feels uncertain.

The dumb-show.

It is unnecessary to add that the use of the *dumb-show* was never resorted to by Shakspere (the exception in *Hamlet* is of course apparent only); and that where he introduces the supernatural agency of ghosts, they appear as factors in the action itself, not as spirits who have returned to earth to make themselves useful by speaking a prologue. This example likewise illustrates Shakspere's use of the *soliloquy* or *monologue* as an aid to dramatic treatment, a subject into which it would carry me too far to enter here. In no direction has he achieved effects more signal and so entirely without parallels beyond the range of his own works[1].

Interludes and masques.

The insertion of *interludes* merely designed for the entertainment for the spectators, and unconnected with the action of the play, was rarely resorted to by Shakspere. In his early romantic comedies indeed—in *Love's Labour's Lost* and the *Midsummer Night's Dream*—the introduction of such intermezzi well accorded with the light texture of the plays; but Shakspere held that the date was 'out of such prolixity' in the midst of actions of deeper interest. Among his later plays *Timon of Athens* (act i. sc. 2) contains a masque, but here as in *Henry VIII* (act i. sc. 4) it is interwoven as a natural incident with the action; the play within the play in *Hamlet* brings about the climax of the tragedy; the masque in *The Tempest* (act iv. sc. 1) alone must, as it seems to me, be regarded as a deference on the part of the poet to a Court fashion, or perhaps to the requirement of a special occasion[2]. But in general, it is noteworthy how Shakspere, instead of allowing the fertility of his imagination to run riot in a species of invention which must have been peculiarly seductive to him, abstained as a rule from thus unsettling the balance of the construction of his dramas [1].

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[1] Cf. for a brief treatment of the theme, Delius, *Über den Monolog in Shakespeare's Dramen*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xvi, 1881.

[2] Cf. on the subject of these interpolations in the dramatic actions of Shakspere's play, Delius, *u. s.*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xxi.

Shakspere's power of characterisation his supreme excellence as a dramatist.

But it was neither in diction and versification, nor in construction and the aids to construction, that the progress of the English drama incurred its deepest debt to Shakspere. The charm with which the magic of his language and verse invested his plays may to this day be more generally felt than any other quality which they possess; and to his enterprise and skill in choosing and disposing of his materials his dramatic productions may continue to owe their more immediate popularity upon the stage. But that which has given the greatest and most enduring potency to his influence upon our national drama, and in ever-widening circles upon the modern Western drama in general, is his own supreme gift as a dramatist—the power of characterisation. In the drawing of characters ranging over almost every type of humanity, in which the experience of succeeding generations has recognised a fit subject for the art of either the tragic or the comic dramatist, he infinitely surpassed all his predecessors, and remains absolutely without a peer; and it was in this direction that he pointed the way which the English drama could henceforth not desert except by becoming untrue to itself. It was afterwards asserted (for original criticism is prone to compromises as well as ambitious of paradoxes) that Shakspere was supremely excellent in male characterisation, but was surpassed by Beaumont and Fletcher in female. We now acknowledge that this notable *dictum* merely proves Dryden's criticism, notwithstanding its inherent strength, to have been at times unable to rise above the influences which environed it. The characters of Shakspere's women are, like those of his men, true to nature in her wonderful variety; and there will chronically be periods, as there will always be individuals, incapable of enjoying whatever is not artificial or forced. As we shall see, it was when this incapacity crept over the dramatic art, as well as over its public at large, that the decay of the English drama set in.

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[1] Modern managers ruthlessly destroy this balance by introducing pageants of all kinds wherever the slightest excuse offers itself. No greater injury could be done to the dramatic interest of Shakspere's plays than by this deliberate dissipation of it.

The greatest among the critics of Shakspere have, as is right and fitting, dwelt with the utmost insistance and amplitude upon this quality of his dramatic genius. They have as of one accord recognised that in the dramatic personages of Shakspere's plays is to be found, in a word, the perfection of this side of the dramatic art. His power of characterisation was to him a gift like that of Hephaestus to the son of Thetis—it made him not only the foremost of the Danai, but the one invincible among them.

Hamlet.

Thus it is in the very play to which the instinct of the public of many ages turns as Shakspere's masterpiece that this excellence seems as it were to overflow even the materials at his command. In *Hamlet* alone, the most marvellously true as it is the most marvellously profound example of Shakspere's power of characterisation, the central character is conceived on a far broader basis than is furnished by the action of the play. In reading this tragedy, or seeing it acted on the stage, the plot is forgotten in the hero. It is as if Hamlet were pausing, not before the deed which he is in reality hesitating to perform—and which is neither a great nor a difficult one—but before action in general. This one necessity proves too heavy for Hamlet to bear; the acorn—to use Goethe's simile—bursts the vessel in which it has been planted; and Hamlet succumbs beneath the fardel which is imposed on all humanity.

Conclusion.

And so I must come to a close of a long but incomplete chapter, leaving the great dramatic characters of Shakspere to interpret themselves. Of so much of his poetic endowment as was not of its nature essentially dramatic, although in the drama it found the readiest and widest opportunity for constant co-operation with his dramatic gifts, I have altogether forborne from speaking, as beyond the immediate scope of this review. The name of Shakspere signifies rapidity, variety, and penetration of analysis, an infinite receptivity and infinite reproductiveness of humour, passion rushing like the mountain torrent and pathos deep as the waters of the sea, and the honeyed sweetness with which the Muses have tipped the tongues of their chosen favourites. But as from the study of his creations—shall we say from the study of *Hamlet*, as the most powerful of them all—we pass to think once more of their author and of his fulfilment of his life's task, it seems as if some feature which must have been supremely distinctive of his works and of his life alike still remained to be noticed in conclusion. What was it that in the last instance enabled Shakspere to bring Hamlet's self home to our mind's eye, except that there was in the poet an element of this as of all the other characters depicted by him? In other words, the greatest of all dramatists is greatest in the universal humanity of his genius, to which there is nothing strange in any force or in any weakness of our nature. He divined every intimation in it of a kinship to existences governed by laws beyond and above its own; and he had an equally true understanding of the frailty of the boundary-wall which separates passion from disease [1].

And thus, if Shakspere's melancholy philosopher of the Forest of Arden has immortalised the fancy that all the world's a stage, the poet's own stage may in return be said to be a world,—a true human world coming home to the intelligence and sympathy of all who are born to a share in its experiences and their teaching.

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[1] These passing references must here suffice as to two of the most remarkable manifestations of Shakspere's dramatic genius, his treatment of the supernatural in its relation to human consciousness, and his treatment of insanity. —I am much gratified to find, after I had marked for quotation at this point of my remarks the following passage in *All's Well that Ends Well*, act ii. sc. 3, that it is cited by Professor Dowden in his discussion of the same topic in his *Shakspere: A Critical Study of his Mind and Art*—a book beyond any praise of mine. 'They say,' there observes Lafeu, 'miracles are past; and we have our philosophical persons to make modern and familiar things supernatural and causeless. Hence it is that we make trifles of terrors, ensconcing ourselves into seeming knowledge, when we should submit ourselves to an unknown fear.' As to Shakspere's treatment of mental infirmity and disease, the subject has exercised an almost unparalleled fascination over commentators and critics. I may refer to two papers in the *Jahrbuch*, the one in vol. xiv, 1879, giving a summary of an essay, *Über die Rollen der Wahnwitzigen in Shakespeare's Schauspielen, und über den Charakter Hamlets insbesondere*, printed by the esteemed philosophic writer Christian Garve as far back as 1796, the other in vol. xiii, 1878, by C. C. Hense, *Die Darstellungen der Seelenkrankheiten in Shakespeare's Dramen*.

CHAPTER V.

BEN JONSON.

The literary fame of Ben Jonson.

NONE of our great Elisabethan dramatists has suffered more in name and reputation from Shakspere's fame than BEN JONSON[1]. No evidence indeed exists to prove, while

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[1] Of the First Folio edition of Ben Jonson's *Works*, the first volume was published in 1616, as revised by himself; the second appeared in a series of instalments, printed surreptitiously, or at least without authority, from 1631 onwards to 1641 (four years after his death). The two volumes appear to have been reprinted in 1640 and 1641 (the latter, according to Lowndes, an extremely incorrect and probably surreptitious edition); and the whole *Works* were again reprinted in a single folio volume in 1692. A reprint of this edition, in 6 vols. 8vo., appeared in 1715; and this sufficed till the publication, in 1756, of the first attempt at a critical edition, accompanied by a Life, of Ben Jonson by Whalley, in 7 vols., 1756. While the ample notes of this edition are occasionally useful, its treatment of the text is wholly uncritical. (See Gifford's observations in the *Memoirs of Ben Jonson*, prefixed to vol. i of his own edition. pp. ccxxxiv *seqq.*) After Whalley's death a revision of his edition was, with the aid of his MSS., begun by his generous friend Waldron, but the publication of it never went beyond a first number (1792). In 1816 appeared Gifford's edition of *The Works of Ben Jonson*, in 9 vols., of which the first includes the *Memoirs*, together with the celebrated essay on *The Proofs of Ben Jonson's Malignity, from the Commentators on Shakspere.* The tradition in question, handed down, as Gifford says, with complacent simplicity 'from Mr. Malone to Mr. Weber, from Mr. G. Chalmers to Mr. Stephen Jones,' had been previously examined on its merits by Octavius Gilchrist in *An Examination of the Charges maintained by Messrs. Malone, Chalmers, and others, of Ben Jonson's Enmity, &c., towards Shakspeare* (1808), and in *A Letter to William Gifford on the late edition of Ford's Plays, chiefly as relating to Ben Jonson* (1811). A revision of Gifford's edition was published in 1875, in 9 vols., by Col. F. Cunningham, who had previously, in 1870, issued a cheap reprint. There is also a single volume edition, with a very readable *Memoir*, by Barry Cornwall (1838). One or two editions of particular plays will be noticed in connexion with these; Mr. H. B. Wheatley's of *Every Man in his Humour* has in addition to its special, a valuable biographical, *Introduction.*

Gifford's edition includes the *Conversations with Drummond,* without which our personal knowledge of Jonson and his views of men and books there are strong indications to disprove, the assumption that during his life the soul of the foremost among our dramatists contemporary with Shakspere was vexed by the superior gifts or the more marked success of his friend. Besides being a born critic, Jonson was possessed of both a generous heart and a robust intellect; and there is a ludicrous incongruity with the transparent nature of the man in the supposition that it was poisoned by a malignant hatred of Shakspere and his fame. The difference between the two poets was indeed extremely great, and reflects itself in almost everything left to us from their respective hands. But it is not a whit less absurd to look upon Jonson and Shakspere as the heads of opposite schools or tendencies in literature, than to suppose the one writer to have personally regarded the other with a jealous feeling of rivalry.

would be far more imperfect than it is. Formerly accessible only in the form of the abstract in Drummond's *Works*, they were first made known in full by Mr. David Laing in the *(Old) Shakespeare Society's Publications* in 1842. Gifford's edition likewise includes the *Jonsonus Virbius*, a collection published by Jonson's friends and admirers about six months after his death, and unparalleled in the number and variety of the contributors to it. With this series of names should be compared the interesting lists compiled by Mr. Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. i. pp. 334 *seqq.*, of the poets, &c. who are mentioned in Jonson's works, and of the 'great ones with whom his poems show that he was in intercourse.'

Among earlier critical observations on Ben Jonson those of Dryden, more especially in his *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (1667-8, republished in a revised form in 1684), are by far the most notable. See also Langbaine's *Account of the English Dramatick Poets* (1691), and Thos. Davies in vol. ii of his *Dramatic Miscellanies* (2nd edn., 1785). Schlegel dwells on Ben Jonson in his *Lectures* (vol. ii. part iii); and Coleridge and Hazlitt have notes on him in vol. ii of the *Literary Remains* and in the *Lectures on the Dramatic Literature of the Age of Elizabeth* respectively.

To the revival in our own days of the interest in Ben Jonson, testimony is borne by the clever chapter (vol. ii. chap. iii) treating of him in Taine's *Histoire de la Littérature Anglaise*; by Mr. Swinburne's *Study of Ben Jonson* (1889); and by the late Mr. J. A. Symonds' *Ben Jonson* (*English Worthies* Series, 1886). Mr. Fleay has, as was fit, treated Ben Jonson with exceptional fulness of detail in his *English Drama*, vol. i. pp. 311-387, and vol. ii. pp. 1-18. Other references will be incidentally made; but I must acknowledge a general obligation in revising this chapter to Dr. Herford's notice of Ben Jonson in vol. xxx (1892) of the *Dictionary of National Biography*, a model summary of its kind. In treating of Jonson's plays, I have also made use of E. Koeppel, *Quellen-Studien zu den Dramen Ben Jonsons, &c.* (Erlangen u. Leipzig, 1895); in discussing his masques, of A. Soergel, *Die Englischen Maskenspiele* (Halle, 1882).

Such criticism, although it may assume the aspect of profundity, is much on the level of Endymion Porter's wit,—if the epigram be actually his which asserts that Shakspere was sent from Heaven and Ben from College. Indeed, with certain exceptions, Ben Jonson has met with a but one-sided sort of justice at the hands of later posterity. Too many lovers of Shakspere have had no appreciative interest to spare for the greatest of his fellow-authors, either in his own or in any subsequent period of the history of our dramatic literature. And yet Jonson's was so emphatically a literary genius—nature had made him, whatever else he was, so true a scholar—that one would have expected him to have become a special favourite of learned commentators. Instead, however, of such having been the rule, it was long customary for critics whose powers were wholly devoted to an admiring study of Shakspere, to bestow upon Jonson nothing beyond a perverse endeavour to find further traces of his supposed malice against his greater fellow-poet. At last—in what seems likely to remain with all its shortcomings the standard edition of Ben Jonson's works—Gifford effectually disposed of these attacks. Being himself a critic of a rather savage order, who had waded through slaughter to his throne, his manner of defence was frequently not more measured than had been the assaults against which it was directed; but it may safely be asserted that he proved his case as a whole. Schlegel, and several English writers on the drama in the earlier part of the present century—among them Coleridge and Hazlitt—contributed materials for a critical estimate of Ben Jonson; but little was added to these endeavours until comparatively recent times, when the pendulum seems again swinging in his direction, although it will hardly reach the degree of admiration entertained for him by his 'sons,' and by their sons after them, as 'the greatest man of the last age[1].'

Life of Ben Jonson (b. 1573).

Benjamin Jonson—or, as his name has stereotyped itself in national usage, Ben Jonson[2]—was born in the year

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[1] See Dryden's *Essay of Dramatic Poesy*.

[2] The familiar abbreviation of Jonson's Christian name was habitual to himself and to his contemporaries (cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 471); it is employed

1573[1]. His grandfather, as he told Drummond, 'came from Carlisle, and he thought from Annandale to it[2]; he served King Henry 8, and was a gentleman. His Father'—which is notable in connexion with Ben Jonson's personal changes of creed—'losed all his estate under Queen Marie, having been cast in prison and forfaitted; at last turn'd Minister: so he was a minister's son. He himself was posthumous born, a moneth after his father's decease.' He adds that he was 'brought up poorly.' Fuller[3], who declares that while unable 'with all his industrious enquiry to find him in his cradle' he can 'fetch him from his long coats,' states that 'when a little child, he lived in Harts-horn lane near Charing-cross, where his Mother married a Bricklayer for her second husband.' This marriage appears to have been contracted two years after the death of Ben Jonson's father; the name of his step-father is unknown[4]. After receiving his early education in a private school at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, Ben Jonson was sent to Westminster School—the seminary of many English poets of note[5]—it is said at the expense of William Camden, then second master and afterwards head master there, who became his firm friend in later life and to whom he acknowledged an indebtedness which in truth, whether or not it extended to the pecuniary cost of his education, he rightly regarded as immeasurable[6].

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by so grave a writer as Lord Clarendon; and, having been inscribed on his tombstone, has become consecrated to the undeviating use of posterity.

[1] Not 1574. See Laing's note, *Conversations, &c.*, p. 39.

[2] If so, his ancestral name must have been *Johnstone.* See a note by C. K. Sharpe, *ib.*, p. 18: 'I believe there never was a Johnson heard of in Annandale or the vicinity; but it was the nest of the Johnstones.' (A Johnston is mentioned as a resident in Annandale in the *Reminiscences* of Carlyle, who, like his friend Edward Irving, was a native of this border district.) Mr. J. A. Symonds, at the cost of an elaborate investigation, satisfied himself that Ben Jonson's heraldic coat of 'three spindles or *rhombi*' represented the 'three cushions' of the Annandale Johnstones.

[3] *The Worthies of England, s. v. Westminster.*

[4] See Collier's note in his *Life of Shakespeare,* p. clxvi, disproving the assumption that the name was Thomas Fowler.

[5] Among them Dryden, Cowper, Churchill.

[6] See *Epigram* xiv; the *Dedication* of *Every Man in his Humour*; and passages in *The King's Entertainment at his Coronation* (where use is made of a metaphor in the *Britannia*), and, according to Gifford, who I suppose refers to the speech of *Heroic Virtue,* in the *Masque of Queens.* The tradition

From Westminster School, where Bishop Morley of Winchester avers that he reached the sixth form, he is stated to have proceeded to Cambridge—according to Aubrey, who probably supposed him to have gone on as a scholar, to Trinity, but according to Fuller to St. John's, where, however, the same authority states him to have remained but a few weeks 'for want of further maintenance.' In the absence of any University or College record on the subject, it must suffice to say that his writings, while vividly reproducing almost every known experience of his life, exhibit no single feature of this sort traceable to University residence[1]. He afterwards graduated Master of Arts in both Universities, but, as he told Drummond, 'by their favour, not his studies[2].' The classical learning which he possessed—and it was of a kind unusual in soundness as well as in extent—may confidently be ascribed to an inborn taste fortified by the excellent schooling of Camden, and cherished up to a period in life after which, for better or for worse, it is apt to assume the airs of despotism.

Jonson supposed to have been a handicraftsman:

On his return to London, Jonson, in a happy hour for his future literary assailants, was taken into his step-father's trade. Notwithstanding more or less haphazard insinuations to the contrary, it is most unlikely that he ever had to work with his hands[3]. But the telling of bricks, or the booking thereof, could hardly have differed in distastefulness to one whose spirit was always high and who had probably enjoyed the most solid part of the training that qualifies for a liberal profession. The actual profession first chosen by

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that Camden paid for Jonson's school education seems to be founded on a literal interpretation of the language of the *Epigram*.

[1] I cannot perceive any point in Mr. Fleay's conjecture that Jonson resided for three years at St. John's as a sizar. In the *Parnassus Plays*, which could hardly have ignored his having been a Johnian, if he was ever such except quite transiently, he is expressly referred to as 'the wittiest fellow of a Bricklayer in England,' and, more categorically, as 'a meere Empirick' (*The Return from Parnassus*, Part ii, act i. sc. 2).

[2] *Volpone* is dedicated to both the Universities, no preference being shown, or, under the circumstances, perhaps felt, for the one over the other.

[3] According to Fuller, he 'help'd in the building of the new structure of Lincolns-Inn, when, having a *trowell* in his hand, he had a *book* in his pocket.'

him—liberal at least in the impulses which in numerous instances led to its adoption—was that of arms; for there can be no doubt that, under the immediate influence of whatsoever motive, he made his way into the Low Countries and into service among the English soldiery still assisting Maurice of Nassau[1]. Jonson afterwards related to Drummond that during the period of his military service he had, 'in the face of both the campes, killed one enemie and taken *opima spolia* from him.' But nothing further is known either about this particular exploit, or as to the nature and precise dates of his campaign or campaigns. His works exhibit no desire on his part to boast of his military actions; but while they indicate that he had gained 'some small rudiments of the science' of war, it can hardly be doubted that his masterly portraits of sham soldiers are all the more true because he had himself been, for however short a time, a real one. The Captain Bobadils, Captain Surlies, Captain Hazards, and Lieutenant Shifts, were at once the laughing-stock and the pest of their age; and Jonson shows a becoming self-consciousness in addressing 'True Soldiers' as members of a

and a soldier.

—'great profession which I once did prove
And did not shame it with my actions then,
No more than I dare now do with my pen[2].'

For the rest, trustworthy dates are wanting as to Jonson's life till the latter part of the year 1597, except in so far as they connect themselves with the issue of his marriage. If 'Maria Johnson,' who died of the plague and was buried in November, 1593[3], was 'the daughter of his youth' whom he laments in his beautiful *Epigram* (xxii), this would fix the date of his marriage—and therefore in all probability of his return to England—as not later than 1592, since the child was only six months old at the time of her death. His eldest son, when he died (also of the plague) in 1603, was in his eighth year[1]. Jonson's wife, as he told Drummond, was 'a shrew, yet honest'; and for five years—but it does not appear at what period of their married life—he lived apart from her. She bore him other children; and in speaking of their lost eldest daughter he did not forget 'her mother's tears[2].'

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[1] This was the period of shifting warfare, which has been so graphically described by Motley in his *History of the United Netherlands* (edn. 1867), vol. iii. pp. 164–5. Possibly, the removal of Sir Francis Vere's three English regiments from the Netherlands to Brittany, in 1592, may have led to Ben Jonson's speedy return home, if this had not taken place sooner. Mr. Fleay, I do not know why, considers that Jonson's campaign 'fits in much better in 1596 in many ways' than in 1591.

[2] *Epigram* cviii.

[3] According to an entry in St. Martin's registers found by the late Mr. Peter Cunningham.

Whatever may have been the date of Jonson's return to England, it cannot have long preceded the commencement of his connexion with the stage, which, in one capacity or another, must for many a day have proved his chief or only means of support. He seems to have begun by the obvious course of enlisting as an actor, and to have found the profession in which he had thus engaged very uphill work at the outset. Wood says that he performed at the Curtain theatre; according to authority still more doubtful he was a member of a strolling company, and 'took mad Jeronymo's part[3].' The date of his beginning to write plays is very roughly fixed at about 1695 by a broad statement of date in a piece of which the period of composition is itself not ascertainable with precision[4]. In any event, Jonson seems by the year 1597 to have been a regular member of Henslowe's company, for his transactions with that manager began in July of that year, when the latter entered the sum of *3s. 6d.* as received on account of Jonson's share; and he was engaged on a play for the company in the December following[1]. Henslowe's speculations, as is known, extended to a variety of theatres; and Mr. Fleay's conclusion may doubtless be accepted that Ben Jonson's share was more likely in Paris Garden than in the Rose. It is, to say the least, questionable whether to Henslowe is to be ascribed the honour of having brought out Ben Jonson's famous comedy of *Every Man in his Humour*. '*The comodey of Umers*,' mentioned in the *Diary* on May 11, 1597, as a 'new play,' was thought by both Malone and Gifford to be identifiable with Jonson's early masterpiece, more especially since the manager's memoranda show it to have been repeated eleven times. But on the title-page of *Every Man in his Humour*, in the first volume of the edition of his works supervised by himself in 1616, Jonson stated that this play had been first acted in 1598 by the Lord Chamberlain's servants; and this statement is confirmed both by an incidental reference of the same date[2], and by the concurrent tradition preserved by Rowe, that Jonson, at the time altogether unknown to the world, had offered to the actors of the company to which Shakspere belonged a play, ignored by them until Shakspere had cast his eye upon it and read it through. Rowe's account, which winds up with the statement that Shakspere was thus induced afterwards to recommend Jonson and his writings to the public, seems to have angered Gifford, and the evidence on which it rests may be regarded as not absolutely convincing; but Collier was doubtless right in considering the identity of the comedy produced by Henslowe with Jonson's piece as unestablished[3].

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[1] See the touching lines *On my First Son* (*Epigram* xlv). Cf. the father's account of his dream at the time of the boy's death, which occurred about the time of King James' coronation, in *Conversations*, p. 19. Jonson had another son, Benjamin, who died in 1635. Cf. Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. i. pp. 346. 356.

[2] *Epigram* xxii.

[3] See Dekker's *Satiromastix*. The story doubtless arose from Jonson's having been employed to write 'adycions' to *The Spanish Tragedy*. (Cf. Henslowe's *Diary*, pp. 201 and 223, and *notes*.) Gifford's remark that the assumption by Jonson of the part of Jeronymo is rendered unlikely by the circumstance that this character was written for an actor of small stature (no doubt the line

'My mind's a giant, though my bulk be small'—

would have come oddly from Ben Jonson) applies only to the *First Part of Jeronymo*. In *The Spanish Tragedy* no reference occurs to the personal appearance of the hero or of his representative on the stage. Cf. Collier, vol. iii. p. 31, *note*.

[4] In the *Prologue* to *The Sad Shepherd*, probably written in 1635, Jonson describes himself as 'he that hath feasted you these forty years.'

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[1] See Henslowe's *Diary*, pp. 80, 106. Yet in his *Life of Shakespeare*, p. clxviii, Collier asserted that 'Henslowe had no pecuniary transactions with Ben Jonson prior to the month of August, 1598.'

[2] See a letter from Tobie Matthew to Dudley Carleton, dated September 20, 1598, in *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, Elisabeth*, 1598–1601, where it is mentioned that an 'Almain' lost three hundred crowns at a new play called *Every Man's Humour*.

[3] The point is discussed in Collier's *Life of Shakespeare*, p. clxv *seqq.*, with all the arguments of which passage I cannot, however, bring myself to

The case can hardly have been one of alterations introduced by Jonson into an earlier piece of his own and so considerable as to have warranted him in offering it to the Lord Chamberlain's company as a new play; and Mr. Fleay[1] has shown reason for concluding that the *Comedy of Humours* was no other than Chapman's *An Humorous Day's Mirth.* In any event, it is certain that in 1598 the play which established Ben Jonson's reputation as a dramatist was acted by the company of which Shakspere was a member, and that he took a personal part in the performance[2].

His first imprisonment (1598).

In the same year, however, Ben Jonson's career as a playwright met with an early and violent interruption. He quarrelled, for some reason unknown, with an actor of some repute in Henslowe's company, named Gabriel Spenser, and in a duel which ensued in Hogsden Fields on September 22 killed his adversary. Having been, in consequence, thrown into prison, he was shortly afterwards brought up for trial at the Old Bailey, and convicted of felony on his own confession. By pleading, however, benefit of clergy, he escaped with no further penalty than the forfeiture of his (probably exiguous) goods and chattels, and a brand on his left thumb. His account of these experiences to Drummond passes over his confession, but mentions that 'his judges could get nothing of him to all their demands but I and no. They placed,' he added, 'two damn'd villains to catch advantage of him, with him, but he was advertised by his keeper; of the Spies he hath ane epigram[3].' Of greater

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agree.—It can scarcely be supposed that *The Case is Altered*, mentioned by Nashe in 1599, was earlier than *Every Man in his Humour* in the date of production.

[1] *English Drama*, vol. i. p. 55.

[2] Cf. *ante*, pp. 21 and 42, *note*. Meres, in his *Palladis Tamia* (1598), mentions Jonson as one of 'the best for Tragedie,' but does not refer to him among those 'best for Comedie.' It is, of course, possible that Meres had some non-extant tragedy in mind, but I think it far more likely that he made a slip.

[3] No. lix.—As to Gabriel Spenser, who is mentioned as 'Gabriel' in Thomas Heywood's *Apology for Actors* (*Old Shakespeare Society's Publications*), p. 43, see Collier, *Memoirs of Edward Alleyn* (*ib.*), p. 51.—Cf. *ib.*, p. 50, Henslowe's letter deploring the loss of 'Gabrell,' 'slayen in Hogesden fyldes by the handes of bergemen Jonson, bricklayer.' Collier's argument (*Life of Shakespeare*, p. clxix), that Henslowe would not have called Jonson

biographical interest is his further statement to Drummond that he was converted to the faith of Rome by a priest who visited him in prison—he does not say whether before or after his conviction, but the pair may be fairly supposed to have been co-mates in durance. He took his religion 'by trust,' as he afterwards told Drummond; and 'thereafter he was 12 yeares a Papist.' Nothing further is known as to the circumstances of this conversion, doubly curious in the son of a minister who had suffered for his creed under Queen Mary; nor can we say when or why he subsequently returned to Protestantism. But it is significant that among the many personal invectives against Jonson there is no insinuation that either of his changes of faith was due to any other motive than conviction. In his later years, at all events, he seems to have been a diligent student of theology, as well as of so many other branches of learning[1]. But, which is of greater consequence, his whole character, in matters where the intellectual and moral forces of his nature came into contact, was far too sturdily conscientious to allow of any suspicion being cast upon his rectitude in these important crises of his inner life[2].

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a bricklayer if he had been acquainted with him as one of his actors, will not hold good; for he certainly did know him in 1597. On the other hand, there seems some force in Mr. Fleay's remark (*English Drama*, vol. i. p. 342), that the express mention of Jonson as a bricklayer is hardly reconcileable with the supposition that he had at this time ceased bricklaying for seven years or more. Colonel Cunningham's suggestion, that this contemptuous designation indicates the origin of the quarrel, must go for what it is worth. Gabriel Spenser may very conceivably have thrown the 'bricklayer' in Jonson's teeth; but it is too ingenious by half to suppose that 'bergemen' may have been an intentional mis-spelling for bargeman, or bargee. Henslowe in his *Diary* usually adulterates Jonson's Christian name to the extent of 'bengemen.'—The original indictment preferred against him was discovered by Mr. J. C. Jeaffreson, and printed in *The Athenaeum*, March 6, 1886, whence it is cited by Mr. Fleay, *u. s.*

[1] Among the MSS. lost in the fire which consumed his library, he deplores—

'Humble gleanings in divinity
After the fathers, and those wiser guides
Whom faction had not drawn to study sides.'

See an *Execration upon Vulcan* (*Underwoods*, lxii).

[2] It is difficult to say whether a characteristic passage in the *Conversations*, with reference to his behaviour immediately after his re-conversion, offensive as it is to our feelings, was meant for irreverence. When Jonson expresses

His release (by 1599).

He must have been released within a few months after his arrest: for his *Every Man out of his Humour*, which breathes a spirit very unlike that of a prisoner, was acted in 1599[1], under which year his name also frequently occurs in Henslowe's *Diary*. We have, however, no record from his own lips in reference to the period of his life covering the remainder of Queen Elisabeth's reign. The Queen witnessed his *Every Man out of his Humour*, and to honour the occasion he composed the 'Epilogue at the Presentation before Queen Elisabeth[2].' Whether Lord Falkland's assertion[3] that she

Jonson and Queen Elisabeth.

> 'With her judicious favours did infuse
> Courage and strength into his' [Jonson's] 'younger Muse'

was based on any substantial proofs of the royal goodwill may be doubted. At her death Jonson was called upon by a contemporary poet[4] to write in honour of the Queen; but this again may mean little or nothing. From some members of the nobility he may have already in Elisabeth's reign received patronage; with the Spencer family at Althorpe at least, which is so pleasantly associated with our poetic literature, he must have been acquainted before he composed the entertainment to welcome Queen Anne and

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a wish to be a 'churchman,' so as to be able to speak his mind to the King, he of course means a clergyman.—Apart from his attitude towards the great Plot, the solitary passage indicative of his religious sympathies during the time when he was a professed Catholic is, so far as I know, to be found in *Cynthia's Revels*, act i. sc. 1, where he justly ridicules the City magistrates for showing their 'religion in pulling down a superstitious cross, and advancing a Venus, or Priapus, in place of it.' Mere sarcasms against the Puritans are of course thickly strewn through Jonson's writings; but on these it would be a mistake to put so special an interpretation, even where (as in *The Alchemist*, written possibly before his re-conversion, act iii. sc. 1) the Puritan horror of Rome is ridiculed.

[1] No importance need perhaps be attached to the circumstance that in the Dedication of this comedy to the Inns of Court, first published in 1616, he says that when he wrote this play he 'had friendship with divers' in the societies addressed.

[2] In a line in this Epilogue Whalley thought he recognised an allusion to the *Faerie Queene*; but Gifford attacks him most savagely for his 'deplorable' blunder.

[3] Quoted by Gifford.

[4] Cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 502 *note*.

Prince Henry there in 1603[1]; but other noble patronage which is known to have been bestowed upon him seems to appertain to the reigns of James I and Charles I.

His means and habits of life.

But it was not in his character to be a mere hanger-on of the great[2]; and the patronage he afterwards received was the reward of literary work. Undoubtedly his main resource must still have been the proceeds of his profession as a playwright[3], though these were but slender, if he was accurate in telling Drummond that 'of his Plays he never gained £200.' We need not enquire whether the calculation included the payments for the 'additions' made by him to old plays—including the new insertions, the identity of which is disputed, in *The Spanish Tragedy*[4]. He must, in any event, have often been in sore straits how to obtain the necessaries of life, and the means for those indulgences which must at an early period have become necessaries to him[5]. But it was not only wine 'raw' or 'burnt,' or 'roguish' tobacco, which he found at the Mermaid, but also the company of wits and poets—a company of which in the end he came to be freely acknowledged as the chief and centre.

His quarrel with Dekker and Marston (1600-3).

Bohemia, we know, has always been a country largely disturbed by civil wars; and with Jonson's next known play we find him unmistakeably in the midst of the fray, into which he had possibly already entered in *Every Man out of his Humour*. In *Cynthia's Revels*, acted by the children of the Queen's Chapel in 1600—which will be briefly described below—he was thought by two playwrights, with one of whom he had previously worked, to have satirised them.

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[1] In the concluding note to this entertainment (the masque of *The Satyr*) Jonson speaks of Lord Spencer as 'his noble friend' to whom 'his affection owes servicable right.' Ben Jonson's name, so conspicuous in Nichols' *Progresses, &c. of King James I*, does not occur in the same author's *Progresses &c. of Queen Elizabeth*. The anecdotes, by the bye, which Jonson told Drummond about Queen Elisabeth are the reverse of respectful.

[2] 'He never esteemed a man for the name of a Lord.' *Conversations*.

[3] Gifford notes from Henslowe three sums—twice of 40*s.* and once of 20*s.*—received by Jonson in 1599 for plays in course of writing by him in conjunction with Dekker, with Dekker and Chettle, and alone.

[4] Cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 305.

[5] 'Sundry tymes he hath devoured his bookes, *i. e. sold them all for necessity*.' *Conversations*.

The younger of the pair, Marston, if he was the author of *Jack Drum's Entertainment*, retorted with a satirical portrait of Jonson; and both were preparing a more elaborate assault when he anticipated them by the production of *The Poetaster* (1601), composed in heat, if not in haste (he says that he completed it in fifteen days), which plainly assumed the offensive against both his adversaries. Hereupon Dekker brought out his *Satiromastix, or The Untrussing of the Humorous Poet* (1602); and the quarrel had now become too hot to last. As appears from the concluding lines of the *Apologetic Dialogue* suffixed by Jonson to *The Poetaster*—so eminently 'apologetic' that he says he was 'restrained from repeating it by authority[1]'—he, with commendable prudence, resolved to turn from comedy to the serener sphere of tragedy. A '*Richard Crookbacke*' was at least in his thoughts about this time, when he was making additions to *The Spanish Tragedy*[2]; and he seems to have found in 'one Townesend,' a personage otherwise unknown, a patron who enabled him to tide over the evil moment, and opportunely as well as characteristically to 'scorne the world[3].' In 1603 his *Sejanus* was produced at the Globe, Shakspere taking part in the performance. If, therefore, as Mr. Fleay gathers from a well-known passage in *The Returne from Parnassus*[4], Shakspere was involved in the professional controversy in opposition to Jonson, the quarrel between them cannot on this occasion have gone very deep. But, from whatever cause, *Sejanus* was unfavourably received, and after a short time withdrawn from the stage.

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[1] Cf. the quarto edition of 1602, cited by Gifford, *Memoirs*, p. lxi, *note* 3.

[2] Henslowe's *Diary*, ed. Collier, p. 223, *s.d.* June 24, 1602.

[3] Collier, vol. i. p. 321.

[4] Part ii. act iv. sc. 3: (Kempe *loquitur*) 'O that Ben Jonson is a pestilent fellow, he brought up *Horace* giving the Poets a pill, but our fellow Shakespeare hath given him a purge,' &c.—As mentioned above, Mr. Jacob Feis (*Shakspere und Montaigne*, 1884) considers that *Hamlet* contained a veiled attack upon Montaigne; he believes, in fact, that *Hamlet* was the 'purge' in question, administered to the representative antagonist of Shakspere in the quarrel as to the merits of Montaigne, excited by the preparation, and by the appearance, in 1603, under special patronage, of Florio's translation of the *Essays*. The discovery, as a whole, seems to me a mare's nest; certain special points in Mr. Feis' argument, as affecting Jonson, will be referred to below.

Accession of James I (1603).

The accession to the throne in the same year of James I opened to Jonson facilities for the exercise of literary powers which, as is well said by Fuller, 'were not so ready to run of themselves, as able to answer the spur.' On April 5 the Scottish successor to the English throne set forth on his southward journey, 'accompanied with multitudes of his nobility.' His 'traine encreased' as he passed slowly on; and feasts were furnished forth such as might be as delectable as possible to him wherever he halted on his first English progress. Into 'Maister Oliver Cromwell's House' at Hinchinbrook Priory the newly-released Earl of Southampton bore the sword before his Majesty; and here there also attended on him the 'Heads of the Universitie of Cambridge,' offering 'a most learned and eloquent Oration in Latine.' On May 7 the King entered London, and on the 11th rested at the Tower. His progress had been one of extreme brilliancy; honours—knighthoods more especially—had been showered upon numberless aspirants; and the poetical waiters upon fortune whose 'sorrowe' had speedily changed into 'joy' had greeted him with panegyrics at Burley, at Theobalds, and doubtless elsewhere[1].

Jonson engaged on masques and entertainments (1603 *seqq.*).

During the greater part of June, the King seems to have held his Court at Greenwich; but he paid frequent visits to some of the principal houses in Middlesex and Surrey. His Queen and eldest son and daughter were meanwhile following from Scotland; and on their way the two former were entertained by Sir Robert Spencer of Althorpe (near Northampton), who was soon afterwards raised to the peerage, partly no doubt in acknowledgment of the magnificence with which he had manifested his loyalty on this occasion. The masque of *The Satyr* produced on this occasion was from Ben Jonson's pen—the first of a long series of similar productions[2]. His genius accommodated itself at once so promptly and so perfectly to the sudden demands of the taste—not of course absolutely novel, but novel in its intensity—fostered by the circumstances of the time and the personal tastes of the new sovereign, that he became almost as a matter of course, in Mr. Fleay's words, 'chief masque and entertainment provider to the Court.' Already on March 15, 1604, we meet with him again doing 'his part' for the King's royal passage through the city[1]; a few days afterwards he salutes the sovereign's 'happie entrance' to his first high session of Parliament[2] (which by the bye very speedily entered into a discussion of the grievances arising from purveyors—an unwelcome comment on the details of royal progresses[3]); on May-day of the same year Sir William Cornwallis privately entertained the King and Queen at Highgate with Ben Jonson's gay little masque of *The Penates*[4]; and on Twelfth-night, 1605, the poet's *Masque of Blackness* had the crowning honour of 'being personated by the most magnificent of Queens, Anne, of Great Britain, with her honourable Ladyes' at Whitehall[5]. When in January, 1606, he was employed with Inigo Jones upon a Court entertainment held at a marriage celebrated there[6], the regular course of the reign had long begun, and he was fairly established in his position.

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[1] See Nichols' *Progresses, &c. of King James I. Sorrowes Joy* is the not infelicitous title of a collection of verses mingling 'a Lamentation' for Queen Elisabeth with 'a Triumph for the prosperous succession of' King James (1603). The panegyric at Burley was by Daniel.

[2] Nichols, *ib.* vol. i. p. 175.

Under the sunshine of royal notice, which undoubtedly grew into royal favour, and of the patronage of noble houses which followed as a matter of course, life must have assumed a brighter aspect for Ben Jonson. His literary quarrels too seem to have subsided—to be renewed in due season—about this time; for in 1604 Marston dedicated his *Malcontent* to his recent antagonist in most respectful and affectionate terms; and the Epilogue of the same play contained a manifest reference to Jonson's deserts[7]. In 1605, however, at the very time when his singular aptitude as a writer of masques had already commended him to the royal favour, he was, together with Marston and Chapman, involved in what threatened to prove a very serious trouble.

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[1] Nichols' *Progresses, &c. of King James I*, vol. i. p. 377. [2] *Ib.* p. 420.
[3] *Ib. Preface*, p. xi. [4] *Ib.* p. 431. [5] *Ib.* p. 479. [6] *Ib.* p. 590.
[7] See Gifford's *Memoirs*. The peace was not lasting; but the subsequent attack of Marston upon Jonson need not be here discussed. His own most connected account of his relations with Marston to Drummond was as follows: 'He had many quarrells with Marston, beat him, and took his pistol from him, wrote his Poetaster on him; the beginning of them were, that Marston represented him in the stage, in his youth given to' immorality. That he nourished his ill-will towards Marston appears from another passage in the *Conversations*.

His voluntary imprisonment (1604).

In this year Chapman had returned to the stage with a comedy called *Eastward Hoe*, produced by him in conjunction with Marston, Jonson apparently likewise contributing to it. This play (briefly noticed below among Chapman's dramatic works) contained one or more passages which, as reflecting on the Scotch, gave offence to Sir James Murray, a Scotch gentleman high in the King's favour [1]. The circumstance having been made known to the King, the arrest of Chapman and Marston was ordered; and Jonson, although he appears to have had nothing to do with the offensive passage (a consolatory fact for any Scotchman who likes to claim him as a compatriot), 'voluntarily,' as he afterwards related, 'imprissoned himself with' them. 'The report was,' he continues in his account to Drummond, possibly without understating the amount of the danger which he had incurred, 'that they should then have had their ears cut and noses. After their delivery, he banqueted all his friends; there was Camden, Selden, and others; at the midst of the feast his old Mother dranke to him, and shew him a paper which she had (if the sentence had taken execution) to have mixed in the prisson among his drinke, which was full of lustie strong poison, and that she was no churle, she told, she minded first to have drunk of it herself[1].'

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[1] It is probable that the passage cited by Collier, vol. i. p. 343, *note*, and omitted from some of the copies of the play printed in 1605 (where Seagull describes Virginia as peopled by 'only a few industrious Scots, perhaps, who indeed are dispersed over the face of the whole earth,' and goes on to speak of them as great friends to England 'when they are out on't,' and to wish them out of it accordingly), was the stone of offence. Yet though, as Mr. Collier says, there are many passages ridiculing James I's 'thirty pound knights' (referred to in act iv. sc. 1; and cf. act i. sc. 1 in other plays besides *Eastward Hoe*, the allusion may have made Sir James Murray wince *in propriâ personâ*.

Sir James Murray, *Scotus* (as he is, with a curious coincidence of emphasis, called), was knighted by King James August 5, 1603 (Nichols, *u. s.*, vol. i. p. 246). On September 25, 1605, mention is made of a royal gift to him at the christening of his child of 'one cupp and cover of silver guilt' (*ib.* p. 601). In the year 1605–6 he received a 'free gift' from the King of £100 (*ib.* vol. ii. p. 44). As Collier points out (vol. iii. p. 464), the offence given by the play was not serious enough to prevent its production before the King, of course with the objectionable passages omitted, in 1614.

Jonson and Chapman's second imprisonment (1605).

Whatever may have been the actual measure of their danger—Chapman is said to have been in favour with the Prince of Wales, and Jonson, too, by this time had friends at Court—the prisoners were soon released. In the spring of 1605, however, Jonson and Chapman were once more in trouble, being imprisoned on account of 'a play' of name and contents unknown. They appear to have been released as a result of an eloquent appeal, which is extant, addressed by Jonson to the newly-created Earl of Salisbury; but it seems useless to speculate as to the identity of the play in question[2].

Jonson's connexion with the Gunpowder Plot enquiry (1605).

So far, at all events, was he from having by these two imprisonments incurred any lasting suspicion of disloyalty, that in November, 1605, immediately upon the discovery of the so-called Gunpowder Plot, the Privy Council chose him as an agent for applying to certain priests of the Church of Rome to take some line of action desired by the King's Government. Jonson, however, was obliged to inform the Earl of Salisbury that he had failed in the application which he made first to the Chaplain of the Venetian Ambassador, and then in other quarters; he added that, had he been a priest himself, he 'would have put on Wings to such an occasion'; and that he was prepared to make a fresh attempt 'if a better person cannot be found[3].' There seems little doubt but that the purport of his mission had been to discover some priest who, in spite of the rules as to the secrets of the confessional, would make revelations as to the authorship of the plot.

His career as a dramatic poet 1605–1616).

It is unnecessary to pursue here the details of the services which, in the less perilous years that ensued, he rendered to the Court and to prominent members of the nobility as the author of masques and of similar entertainments. He appears to have occasionally attended the royal progresses, and was no doubt a welcome guest in the houses of many of the great. Whether or not the title of Laureate was conferred on him in any more regular way than that in which it had hitherto been worn by many who composed for the Court, a pension of one hundred marks was conferred upon him in 1616; and the favour enjoyed by him, though not uninterrupted, was enduring. His plays for the popular stage, as already noted, brought him anything but a large income; though some of them seem to have been also acted at Court. No man could have been less prone than he was to any readiness to woo the public taste, which at times he aspired to force into a judicious commendation of his efforts, while on other occasions he showed himself inclined to despise it altogether. Thus, though his *Volpone* (1605), afterwards produced at both the Universities, was received with great applause, his second tragedy, *Catiline* (1611), gained only a doubtful success. But of these and his other plays I shall speak below; it will suffice here to note the dates of two others which exhibit his powers as a dramatist at their height. *The Alchemist* was produced in 1610, and *Bartholomew Fair* in 1614. His popularity as a dramatist was still very variable, as is proved by the fact that in 1619, according to his own account, only half of his comedies were in print. Of the collected edition of his works which he undertook in 1616, he revised not more than the first (folio) volume. Indeed, if his own words are to be trusted, he came in his later years to look on the stage with disgust[1]; and from 1616 to 1625 he produced nothing for it. Doubtless in this period his chief means of living were his pension and the fees earned by him from the nobility; but it is pleasing to find proofs of the recognition of his genius and character in many

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[1] *Conversations*, xiii.

[2] See the letter, found by Dr. Birch in the *Hatfield Papers*, and communicated by the elder D'Israeli to Gifford, in the *Memoirs* prefixed to his edition, vol. i. p. cxxxix, *note*.—Mr. Fleay's speculations as to the identity of the play arrive at no definite result.

[3] See *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, James I*, 1603–10, p. 245; and cf. for an account of these transactions, Mr. H. B. Wheatley's *Introduction* to his edition of *Every Man in his Humour*, 1877, pp. xv–xviii.

Cessation of his dramatic labours (1616–1625).

His patrons.

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[1] See the vigorous lines in his *Ode to Himself*:

'And since our dainty age
Cannot endure reproof,
Make not thyself a page
To that strumpet the stage,
But sing high and aloof,
Safe from the wolf's black jaw, and the dull ass's hoof.'

traces of an intercourse quite removed from the ordinary relations between buyer and seller. Thus from the Earl of Pembroke, a patron whose name connects itself with a still greater memory than Ben Jonson's, the latter himself told Drummond that he received £20 'every first day of the new year to buy new books.' With another patron, Esmé Stuart, Lord d'Aubigny[1], Jonson at one time abode five years.

His library.

Pembroke's bounty at all events fell on no barren soil. It was, we cannot doubt, conscientiously expended, and not carried to the Mermaid; for Ben Jonson was a genuine scholar, whose chief pride was his library, afterwards destroyed by a fire which inflicted an irreparable loss upon our literature. His love of reading must have been insatiable; of his book-learning numberless illustrations are furnished by his plays, in one of which he bears testimony to it with pardonable self-sufficiency[2]. But to the canary-sack must be ascribed part of the boastfulness which made him tell Drummond that 'he was better versed, and knew more in Greek and Latin, than all the Poets in England, and'—here Drummond appears to have imperfectly understood the author of the *English Grammar*—'quintessence their brains.' To this subject, however, I shall have occasion to return.

His taverns.

Thus in occupations and doubtless also in distractions manifold his life flowed on, for Jonson was not one of those ignorant of the charms of desipience *in loco;* and the *loci* were many in Dowgate and off Cheape[3], and near and in Fish-street Old and New, which opened their doors to his portly form. Like his great namesake. with whom it seems now and then impossible to avoid comparing him, he must have felt London to be his 'element[1].' Twice, however, he seems to have quitted it on a longer absence.

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[1] He was the younger son of James's old favourite the Duke of Lennox, whom he succeeded in 1623. See *Epigram* cxxvii, and the Dedication of *Sejanus*.

[2] *Staple of News* (i. 2), where Gossip Tattle says of one of the author's plays: 'He is an errant learned man that made it, and can write, they say, and I am foully deceived but he can read too.'—The poem on the burning of his library, which seems to have taken place at some time between 1619 and 1625, has been already cited.

[3] Jonson's Mermaid was in Bread-street, Cheapside. See Dyce's note in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Works*, iii. 129.

His journey to France (1613 or 1612).

For in 1613 or the previous year, possibly on account of the cessation of all Court festivities by reason of the death of Henry Prince of Wales, the Marcellus of the Stuart dynasty, Jonson went to France, in the capacity of governor to one of the sons of Sir Walter Ralegh (at that time a State-prisoner in the Tower[2]). We know that Jonson was in Paris in 1613, where he made the acquaintance of Cardinal de Perron, who showed him his translations of Vergil, and was told by the frank poet 'that they were naught.' The only other record of this peregrination is the reverse of creditable either to governor or to pupil; but the fact of the journey itself is interesting as establishing the certainty of a personal connexion between Jonson and Ralegh, of whose problematical character however the poet seems to have formed a rather severe judgment[3].

His Scotch journey (1618-9).

His other journey has become more famous, although Gifford speaks of the time in which Jonson made it as 'the most unfortunate period of his life,' in view of the melancholy results which a visit paid by him on this occasion are supposed to have had for his good name. Rather, had it not been for Jonson's journey to Scotland we should be without the liveliest picture we possess of him.

Ben Jonson's resolution to pay a visit to the native land of his ancestors appears to have been due in the first instance to the sojourn of his royal patron in his Scottish kingdom in 1617—after an absence of fourteen years. In June of that year a London newsletter reported that 'Ben Jonson is going on foot to Edinburgh and back for his profit.' But it was not till more than a twelvemonth later, after King James and his retinue, including Southampton and Pembroke among other English nobles, had returned to London, that Jonson set forth on his pedestrian expedition. Lord Chancellor Verulam, on whom he had waited before taking his departure, had facetiously objected that 'he loved not to see poesy go on other feet than poetical dactylus and spondæus.' Ben Jonson had not advanced very far on his journey before he learnt that John Taylor, the Water-poet, —so called because he plied a boat on the Thames and sold literary compositions to his customers—had engaged in the same venture, though taking a different route and travelling ostensibly without a penny in his purse. Jonson, who started about Midsummer, 1618, moved by the great northern route, *i.e.* by York and Newcastle.

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[1] 'The town is my element; there are my friends, there are my books . . . there are my amusements.' Dr. Johnson to Dr. Brocklesbury (1784).

[2] Apparently the eldest son, Walter, as the second, Carew, was then only nine years of age; and could hardly have perpetrated the practical jest (creditable neither to the youth nor to his 'leader') described in the *Conversations*. Cf. Ralegh's *Works* (Oxford University Press ed., 1829), vol. i. p. 417.

[3] 'Sir W. Raughley,' he told Drummond, 'esteemed more of fame than conscience. The best wits of England were employed for making his Historie. Ben himself had written a piece to him of the Punick warre, which he altered and set in his booke.' Jonson seems to have superintended the publication of the *History of the World* in 1614. See Mr. Edmund Gosse's *Raleigh* (*English Worthies Series*), where (pp. 175-6) it is conjectured that the lines printed opposite the frontispiece of the *History of the World*, and reprinted in *Underwoods* (No. xlii) in a less polished form, are Ralegh's, with improvements by Jonson.

Not much is known of Jonson's doings in Scotland, where he remained till the end of January, 1619. About the latter part of September, 1618, however, the Water-poet found him established at Leith, in the house of John Stuart, a substantial inhabitant and Water-Bailie of that port, and in high good humour, consorting with 'noblemen and gentlemen that knew his true worth and their own honours.' Whether he had previously visited Annandale is mere matter of conjecture. Late in September or early in October, 1618, however, the very notable honour was conferred upon him of being admitted a burgess of the City of Edinburgh, in accordance with a vote passed by the Council on September 25; and a further record remains of the sum of £221 6*s.* 8*d.* of Scots money expended on a banquet provided for the occasion. About Christmas he began his celebrated visit, which lasted for two or three weeks, to the Scottish poet, William Drummond, at his beautiful seat of Hawthornden, about seven miles from Edinburgh; and on January 25, 1619, he started from Leith on his homeward

His visit to Drummond.

walk, not reaching London till late in April or early in May[1].

Drummond of Hawthornden.

Of Jonson's visit to Drummond of Hawthornden, the latter has preserved a memorable record in his notes of his guest's Conversations. Drummond, born in 1585, was a gentleman of good education, who had seen something of the continent in his younger days, and by his travels and studies abroad, as well as by visits to London, had strengthened his inborn taste for fine literature. His library was well stocked with the works of the contemporary English poets, and he had attached himself to the new school of Scottish writers who cultivated composition in literary English instead of in their native dialect[2]. He had already published an elegy on the death of Henry Prince of Wales, under the title of *Tears on the Death of Moeliades*, besides a collection of poems on various subjects, possessing high merit, and a panegyrical poem on the occasion of the King's recent visit to Scotland, under the designation of *Forth Feasting*. These pieces had found their way to London, and courtesies had been interchanged between their author and Drayton, at that time engaged upon his *Polyolbion*[3].

Thus, Jonson's Scotch host was one in the literary atmosphere of whose house he could not but feel at home; and he seems to have made himself so with remarkable completeness. Drummond kept memoranda of Ben Jonson's talk during the visit, and two or three friendly letters were exchanged by them after Jonson's departure for the south[4].

Jonson's Conversations with Drummond.

Ben Jonson, as has by this time become sufficiently manifest, was not one of those who, in the expressive German phrase, wear a leaf before the mouth. His moral like his physical nature was cast in a generously ample mould; he spoke his mind freely in praise and blame; uttered his opinion of men and books in round terms; and gave himself scant trouble about afterthoughts when, although ordinarily silent in society, he had allowed copious draughts of canary to loosen his tongue. Talk flowing under such circumstances will not always bear analysis; and when Drummond, after Ben Jonson's departure, summarised his impressions of his guest in a note of his own—not of course intended for the public eye—he was probably himself not in the judicial frame of mind requisite for the purpose[1]. By means of a slight modification of expression many of Drummond's reflexions upon Jonson might easily be converted into tributes of praise; and even as the criticism stands, it fairly tallies with a character in which there were generous features as well as unpleasant, and whose worst faults were faults of temper. Nor should it be overlooked that Drummond was not a 'countryman' of Jonson's, and that Jonson's criticism of Drummond's poems had been of too candid a description to be speedily forgotten by their author[2].

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[1] For a delightful account of Jonson's Scottish expedition and experiences, see Professor Masson's paper, *Ben Jonson in Edinburgh*, in *Blackwood's Magazine*, vol. cliv, December 1893.—In Masson's *Life of Drummond of Hawthornden* (1873), an animated sketch had already been given of Jonson's visit to Drummond, with extracts from the *Conversations*.—Jonson mentions his journey in the masque of *News from the Moon*, produced early in 1621.

[2] Of these writers the best known was William Alexander, afterwards Earl of Stirling, who will be noticed below as one of the dramatists of his age.

[3] See Masson, *u. s.*

[4] *Ib.* pp. 108–110.

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[1] The following is the well-known postscript to the *Conversations*, dated January 19, 1619: 'He is a great lover and praiser of himself; a contemner and scorner of others; given rather to losse a friend than a jest; jealous of every word and action of those about him (especially after drink, which is one of the elements in which he liveth); a dissembler of ill parts which raigne in him, a bragger of some good that he wanteth; thinketh nothing well bot what either he himself or some of his friends and countrymen hath said or done; he is passionately kynde and angry; careless either to gaine or keep; vindicative, but, if he be well answered, at himself.

'For any religion, as being versed in both. Interpreteth best sayings and deeds often to the worst. Oppressed with fantasie, which hath ever mastered his reason, a generall disease in many Poets. His inventions are smooth and easie; but above all he excelleth in a Translation.' (Besides the above there is an ill-natured joke about Ben Jonson's plays, which Drummond probably had from Jonson himself.)

[2] 'His censure of my verses was: That they were all good, especiallie my Epitaphe of the Prince, save that they smelled too much of the Schooles, and were not after the fancie of the tyme; for a child (sayes he) may writte after the fashion of the Greeks and Latine verses in running; yett that he wished, to please the King, that piece of Forth Feasting had been his owne.'—Jonson and Drummond remained on very friendly terms after their parting, the Scotchman supplying the Englishman with literary and other information of the most various kinds—including an account of the system of University education at St. Andrews and its differences from that obtaining at Edinburgh.

In any case, the *Conversations* now remain for any one to read; and they reveal enough of Jonson's character to make it unnecessary to read them in the light of Drummond's concluding comments.

His life and labours after his return (1619-25).

Whatever literary works connected with his Scottish journey had been contemplated by Ben Jonson remained unexecuted, or at least unpublished. Among the former was a *Lochlomond Pastoral*, among the latter an account of the journey itself, 'sung with all the adventures,' which perished with so many other works or drafts of works in the burning of the poet's library[1]. After his return to England, he appears to have resumed his former course of life. In 1619 his visits to the country seats of the nobility were varied by a sojourn at Oxford with Richard Corbet, then Senior Student at Christ Church and afterwards Bishop of Norwich—in whose verse a singularly genial humour prevailed over the affectations of the school of poets to which he belonged. Although, as has been already stated, Jonson wrote nothing for the stage till 1625, he composed numerous masques, in co-operation with Inigo Jones, with whom he had formerly had a quarrel. He continued in high favour with the King, who, besides raising his pension from a hundred marks to two hundred pounds[2], in 1621 granted him the reversion of the office of Master of the Revels[3], and is even said to have wished to confer on him that honour which the royal fountain so liberally dispensed, but for which Jonson himself appears not to have been eager—viz. the honour of knighthood[4].

He recurs to the stage (1625; 1629).

Yet the close of King James's reign found Jonson in no prosperous condition. His mode of life can never have been a prudent one; to the Mermaid had succeeded the Devil Tavern; and in 1625 he was obliged to recur to the stage, where in this year he brought out his *Staple of News*.

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[1] See *An Execration upon Vulcan*, already quoted.

[2] As, however, Charles I afterwards converted Jonson's allowance of one hundred marks into the same number of pounds, the increase granted by James I would not seem to have been of a permanent nature.

[3] Sir J. Astley, who held the office, however, survived him.

[4] Rev. Joseph Mead to Sir Martin Statwelle (Sept. 21, 1621) in *Court and Times of James I*, vol. ii. p. 275.

About the following year, however, disease came upon him to increase his troubles; and we find no traces of masques or other entertainments in which he was engaged, after the masque of *The Fortunate Isles* produced in 1727. He was again on ill terms with Inigo Jones, who seems to have in the end altogether prevented the employment of his adversary; or, which was the same thing, the literary element in masques gradually vanished. Some pecuniary relief was secured to Jonson by his appointment, in 1628, as chronologer to the City of London, in succession to Thomas Middleton; but in 1629 he once more essayed the stage with *The New Inn.* Unfortunately this comedy proved an utter failure.

His last years.

The *Epilogue* to this piece, which lacks neither pathos nor dignity, contained a brief allusion to the neglect which he was experiencing from the new sovereigns[1]; but King Charles hereupon immediately sent him a gift of a hundred pounds, and on another more cheerful appeal from the gratified poet[2] increased his annuity from one hundred marks to the same figure in pounds, adding an annual butt of canary[3]. These favours, however, apparently constituted the last royal patronage bestowed upon him; the City too had withdrawn some at least of its annual payments[4]; and Ben Jonson began from a sick-bed—we may suppose at Westminster, where in 1629 at all events he resided—to address appeals for assistance to noble patrons. These did not remain without response. The kindness of the Earl (afterwards Duke) of Newcastle must have cheered the days of Jonson's decline; and the intercourse between Jonson and this generous noble, a true lover of the drama to which indeed he contributed attempts of his own, seem to have been on a pleasant literary footing[1]. Ben Jonson wrote one or two more plays which bear unmistakeable marks of the decay of his powers, and one or two little entertainments. When the end came, on August 6, 1637, there was found among his papers part of a pastoral drama, *The Sad Shepherd*, the great beauty of which (unless it was composed at an earlier date) proves that he was still in possession of his poetic powers when at last the pen dropped from his palsied hand. Besides this, he left other works behind him[2].

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[1] 'And had he lived the care of king and queen,
His art in something more yet had been seen.'

Jonson's arrest in October, 1625, as the author of some sympathetic lines to Felton, then in prison as Buckingham's assassin, was due to a mistake. The real author, a clergyman named Townley, was a friend of his.

[2] See 'The Humble Petition of Poor Ben
To the "best of monarch, masters, men,
King Charles."'—*Underwoods.* xcv.

[3] I presume this gift to have originated the custom of the laureate's annual butt of sherry.—The warrant of King Charles I, dated March 26, 1630, is printed by Gifford, *u. s.*, p. clv, *note.* It contains no mention of the title poet-laureate, or of any special function; but refers to his good services done, and to special services 'of his witt and pen' enjoined and expected.

[4] 'Yesterday the barbarous Court of Aldermen have withdrawn their chandlerly pension for verjuice and mustard, £33 6*s.* 8*d.*' (Letter to the Earl of Newcastle, quoted in Masson's *Life of Milton*, i. 391.) This was owing to a resolution of the City authorities in 1631 that Jonson should receive no further pay or fees as Chronologer.

His death (*Aug.* 6, 1637).

In his old age, and when the decline of his powers was hastened by sickness and want of means, Ben Jonson was still regarded as the veteran chief of English literature. The *Mermaid* days had passed of which Beaumont had sung, when the 'best gamesters' had gathered around him as his equals, at least in spirit[3]. The frequenters of the 'Apollo' room in his favourite Devil Tavern were now the charmed circle over which he presided, and which he ruled as a constitutional monarch according to the provisions of the charter drawn up by himself[4]. But his friends and admirers were not confined to those who were 'sealed of the tribe of Ben[5].' Contemporary literature of every description—from

Jonson in his old age as the chief of the world of letters.

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[1] This may be gathered from the Duke's assertion (quoted by Gifford, p. xvi, from the Duchess' *Letters*) that 'he never heard any read well but Ben Jonson.' In return, Jonson complimented the Duke on his fencing and on his horsemanship (*Underwoods*, lxxxix and lxxii),—not, so far as I know, on his plays.

[2] His History of Henry V, complete with the exception of the last year of the reign, had unfortunately perished with his library.

[3] See Master Francis Beaumont's Letter to Ben Jonson (Cunningham, vol. i, and in the *Works* of Beaumont and Fletcher).

[4] See the *Leges Convivales* (Cunningham, vol. iii), and Gifford's note. One rule is particularly good: 'Insipida poemata nulla recitantor': and another likewise deserves quotation: 'Vina puris fontibus ministrentur aut vapulet hospes.'

[5] Cf. *Underwoods*, lxvi.—According to Wood, Jonson was himself in the

Clarendon to Milton, and from Milton to Herrick—abounds with testimonies together proving his position to have been unrivalled among the men of letters of his times; and on his death a crowd of poets hastened to pay their tributes of acknowledgment to one who seems to have been loved more than he was feared, and who left behind him a gap which it was felt must remain unfilled [1]. Better remembered than any of these effusions is the famous epitaph cut in haste on the stone placed over his grave in Westminster Abbey [2]; and though the design of converting the stone into a more elaborate monument was forgotten in the troubled years which ensued, no lapse of time will efface the brief but sufficient legend:

'O rare Ben Jonson!'

Character of his combativeness.

I have dwelt at comparative length upon the outward circumstances of the life of Jonson, both because his long career as a dramatist spans so considerable a period of the history of our dramatic literature, and because there are few authors whose personality is reflected in their writings with equal distinctness and fulness. One reason of this is of course to be sought in the fact that Jonson exercised his literary gifts and powers with perfect consciousness both of the ends which he pursued and of the means which he applied in the process. This consciousness, although it may be found in some of the foremost of the world's poets, is perhaps as a rule peculiarly characteristic of great writers of a rank below that of the very greatest. Ben Jonson, at all events, seems to have found it impossible, whether in his works or in his life, to move in any other way than straight upon the goal which he had in view, loudly

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habit of calling Serjeant John Hoskyns, who 'polish'd the poet and made him speak clean,' by the title of 'father Hoskyns.' (He is best known perhaps as a friend of Sir Henry Wotton.)

[1] These tributes, which include poems by the famous Lord Falkland, by Cleveland, Waller, Cartwright, and Ford, and among less-known dramatists by May, Habington, Mayne, Rutter, and Meade, were published in 1638, six months after Jonson's death, under the title *Jonsonus Virbius*. (Reprinted *ap.* Cunningham, iii. 496 *seqq.*).

[2] Fuller says that Jonson was buried 'about the Belfry.' As to the strange tradition concerning the mode of his burial see Herford, *Studies, &c.*, p. 290 *note*.

announcing his purpose to any one who cared to listen, and avoiding neither the noise of the race-course nor the bruises of an occasional collision. Thus the literary atmosphere in which he was at home was no tranquil one—

> ἐν δὲ πᾶς ἐμεστώθη δρόμος
> κτύπου κροτητῶν ἁρμάτων· κόνις δ' ἄνω
> φορεῖθ'· ὁμοῦ δὲ πάντες ἀναμεμιγμένοι
> φείδοντο κέντρων οὐδέν[1].

His combative character jarred upon the gentler nature of Drummond, and may have often wreathed in smiles the serene countenance of an associate with whom he was brought into more frequent contact. But it is clear that no malice lurked beneath this outspokenness; he often talked too loudly and too plainly, but it would I think be difficult to point to instances where he spoke with conscious untruthfulness. He coloured highly, but not falsely. 'Of all styles he loved most to be named Honest,' nor was the epithet undeserved which he boasted of having had applied to him in 'one hundreth letters[2].'

His self-consciousness.

There may be something diverting to us, but there is assuredly also something honourable to him, in the attitude which he consistently took up towards the public. Undoubtedly there was some force as well as much bitterness in the retort of a popular critic to Ben Jonson's scornful invective against 'the loathèd stage and the more loathsome age':

> 'To rail men into approbation
> Is new to yours [*i.e.* your lute] alone:
> And prospers not: for know,
> Fame is as coy as you
> Can be disdainful[3].'

But, apart from the moral courage, a quality by no means generally characteristic of popular literature, calling for acknowledgment in one who

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[1] Sophocles, *Electra*, 713–716.

[2] See *Conversations*.

[3] See Owen Feltham's *Answer to* Jonson's *Ode (to himself)* : in Cunningham, ii. 386. The warning is the same as that conveyed in the French proverb: 'On prend plus de mouches avec du miel, qu'avec du vinaigre'—a proverb which occurs in an English form in Suckling's *Brennoralt*, act i, where it is applied to the politic treatment of the common people, who, says Melidor,

'are a kind of flies;
They're caught with honey, not with wormwood, Sir.'

'Could (with a noble confidence) prefer
His own, by right, to a whole theatre;
From principles which he knew could not err[1],'

the consciousness which was the basis of this boldness furnishes a proof of true intellectual power. Not only was Jonson brave enough to let the public know that the laws of his art, rather than the measure of their applause, determined his estimate of himself and his works[2]; but like a true artist he sought no applause except where he held himself deserving of it[3]. Thus it was a merited tribute to his memory, when it was sung of him after his death that his

'thoughts were their own laurel, and did win
That best applause of being crowned within[4].'

His anxiety for the approbation of the judicious.

But if Jonson showed little anxiety for the sweet voices of the general public, he was at all times most anxious for the approbation of the judicious. Ever and again he appeals from 'pretenders' to 'understanders[5],' from 'the reader in ordinary' to 'the reader extraordinary[6],' and it is to the latter that he 'submits himself and his work.' Nor can it be doubted that the appeal, though sometimes couched in anything but prudent or conciliatory terms, was always made in a manly and honest spirit[7].

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[1] Cleveland, in *Jonsonus Virbius.*

[2] 'If you dare damm our play in the wrong place we shall take heart to tell you so' (*Magnetic Lady*, act i, *ad fin.*). Cf. the humorous attack upon the perfunctory criticism of 'capricious gallants' in *The Case is altered* (ii. 4). See also the Prologue to *The New Inn.*

[3] 'It is as great a spite to be praised in the wrong place, and by a wrong person, as can be done to a noble mind' (*Discoveries*).

[4] Cartwright, in *Jonsonus Virbius.* Howell says in his *Familiar Letters*, p. 323: '*T. Ca.*' (Thomas Carew) 'buzzed me in the Ear, that tho' Ben had barrelled up a great deal of Knowledge, yet it seems that he had not read the *Ethics*, which among other Precepts of Morality, forbid Self-commendation.' 'But for my part,' continues Howell, 'I am content to dispense with the Roman Infirmity of Ben, now that Time hath snowed upon his Pericranium.'

[5] See the address *To the Reader*, prefixed to *The Alchemist.*

[6] See the addresses prefixed to *Catiline.*

[7] In *Cynthia's Revels* however,—in the Epilogue at all events,—he seems to pass the limit which separates self-consciousness from arrogance. And I am afraid that, in spite of the deprecation of that failing in the Prologue to *The Poetaster*, the tone of that play is similar. But Jonson was then standing at bay; and his whole bearing as a dramatist should not be

His quarrels

To the goodwill of his literary associates there is no reason to suppose Jonson to have been indifferent. While he was certainly far from courting it by flattery, his commendation, when bestowed, was, like everything else which proceeded from him, liberal in amount. He had his likings and dislikings like most men, and spoke them more freely than most. Into the merits of the quarrels which were the result of this outspokenness it is unnecessary to enquire, especially as in no instance are all the circumstances of the dispute before us. His attack upon Munday (in *The Case is Altered*) is hardly worth notice, considering the insignificance of its object, and the legitimateness of the fun made of him. In his disputes with Dekker and Marston it is impossible to determine where the original fault lay; if however Ben Jonson opened the quarrel, he also by his temporary abandonment of comedy put an end to its most virulent phase. Of his quarrels with Inigo Jones the more enduring seems to have originated in the jealousy of the architect rather than in the envy of the poet[1]. On the other hand, if the *Conversations* with Drummond are full of caustic remarks on his literary contemporaries[2], they likewise contain tributes of praise manifestly the result of inde-

and his friendships.

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judged by instances taken from an exceptional period of his career. How in this period he lost the self-control which comes from self-knowledge is sufficiently illustrated by the circumstance that in the introductory words to the *Apologetical Dialogue* (appended to *The Poetaster*) he speaks of his enemies as having 'provoked him,' and of himself as having 'neglected them ever'! This assumption of indifference is too wonderful to admit of any other explanation than self-delusion.

[1] 'He said to Prince Charles of Inigo Jones, that when he wanted words to express the greatest villaine in the world, he would call him ane Inigo.'

'Jones having accused him of naming him behind his back, A foole; he denied it; but, says he, I said, He was one arrant knave, and I avouch it' (*Conversations*). See also the *Expostulation with Inigo Jones*, and the *Epigram* on him (Cunningham, vol. iii); and cf. *infra* as to the *Tale of a Tub*.—As to the disfavour provoked at Court by Jonson's hostility to Inigo Jones, cf. Howell's *Familiar Letters* (s. d. July 3, 1635), Bk. I. letter ii.

[2] 'Drayton feared him; and he esteemed not of him. . . . Francis Beaumont loved too much himself and his own verses. . . . Day and Middleton were base fellows. . . . Daniel was at jealousies with him. . . . Daniel was a good honest man, had no children; but no poet. . . . Done for not keeping of accent, deserved hanging,' &c. &c.

pendent judgment[1]. Nor, as has been already said, was it only the young aspirants to literary fame who looked up to him in his later days; but the whole literary world of his times; and throughout their lives grave men of letters such as Camden and Selden seem to have affectionately adhered to him, doubtless from motives of personal esteem as well as of intellectual admiration[2].

Jonson and Shakspere.

It may indeed be questioned whether the long-prevalent notion of Jonson as a quarrelsome egotist would have maintained itself, even with the specious support of the evidence of the *Conversations*, had it not been for the perverse ingenuity which endeavoured to fasten on his memory the charge of a consuming jealousy against the greatest of all his literary contemporaries. While we cannot permit ourselves to give absolute credence to most of the pleasant traditions concerning the personal intimacy between Ben Jonson and Shakspere—and pleasant they nearly all are—it may be confidently asserted that the supposed proofs of Jonson's malignity against Shakspere as a writer have collapsed before a close enquiry into their foundations. That Ben Jonson, who criticised whatever he read, also criticised Shakspere is certain. In the *Conversations* he once says of Shakspere that he 'wanted arte,' an observation the value and the justice of which entirely depend on the meaning Jonson attached to the term, which he may be fairly presumed to have interpreted to Drummond[3]. On the other hand, we possess in addition to the lines printed with Jonson's name under the portrait of Shakspere prefixed to the First Folio the famous tribute, *To the Memory of my beloved Master William Shakspeare, and what he hath left us*, and an almost equally well-known passage in the *Discoveries*. The very fact of his having been invited to write the kindly lines under the frontispiece of their edition shows the light in which Shakspere's old comrades of the stage regarded the relation between the two poets. In the longer poem, likewise composed expressly for insertion in the First Folio, I am at a loss to see anything but a tribute of true friendship and genuine admiration,—so enthusiastic, as an eminent critic has pointed out, that in the same poem in which Jonson apostrophises his great rival as 'Soul of the Age' he tells us that Shakspere was 'not of an age, but for all time[1].' If a grudge is concealed in this splendid panegyric, the language of poetry must be judged by contraries. The passage in the *Discoveries*, in fine, is obviously critical in intention: but here the very candour of the judgment offered enhances the value of the sympathetic appreciation which it implies; nor can the essence of the criticism itself be deemed untrue except by the blind worshippers of the mere letter of Shakspere's writings[2].

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[1] So of Donne, Chapman, Southwell. Of Fletcher and Chapman he said that they were 'loved of him'; and went so far as to observe that 'next himself, only Fletcher and Chapman could make a Mask.' For tributes of friendship to various other persons see *Epigrams* and *Underwoods, passim.*

[2] As to his intercourse with Sir Robert Cotton, to whom he put questions concerning intricate matters of Roman geography, cf. the *Life of Cotton* in E. Edwards' *Lives of the Founders of the British Museum* (1870), vol. i. p. 87.

[3] The other remark concerning Shakspere in the *Conversations*, as to the 'shipwrack in Bohemia,' is, as Gifford says, natural and harmless.

But it was not on these familiar passages that the earlier attacks upon Ben Jonson, as a malignant caviller against the transcendent merits of his fellow-poet, were founded. Anxious search was made in Jonson's plays for passages capable of being construed into allusions to productions of Shakspere; and after a number had been found which conveyed (as some were no doubt designed to convey) humorous criticism or sarcasm, it was argued that cumulatively they proved envy and malice on the part of their author. With the aid of a previous essay by Gilchrist[3], conceived in the same sense as his own, Gifford, in the *prolegomena* to his edition of Ben Jonson, applied his trenchant powers to an examination of the passages in question[4], and arrived at the result that the general charge which they were supposed to substantiate was to be absolutely rejected. He has done the task once for all, and his success in accomplishing it is incontestable. There are doubtless passages in Jonson where a satirical allusion is traceable to a Shaksperean passage, character or play[1]; but the nature of the satire in each case calls for consideration even after the satirical intention has been admitted. As a rule, these allusions amount to little more than harmless banter, not only reconcileable with, but indicative of, easy personal friendship[2]. It would not even necessarily conflict with this theory, were we to assume with Mr. Fleay, that at one point of their careers Shakspere and Jonson stood on opposite sides in the stage controversies of the day, which at times were probably not more embittered by personal malice than were some of the combats of modern journalism described ironically in Thackeray's pages[3]. The significance of the evidence concerning such controversies to be found in particular plays by Jonson will be most conveniently noted in treating of them separately. Here it may suffice to assert, that even had Jonson thought fit to make fun of his great contemporary in the spirit in which Aristophanes made fun of Æschylus—seeking to characterise him at once in his great qualities and in the supposed defects of those qualities—only a shallow judgment would find herein a proof of malignity; but the truth is that Jonson hardly ever passes beyond an occasional jest devoid of malice properly so called; whence it results that the charge against him is ill-founded rather than unfounded, but not the less in itself empty and absurd.

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[1] Dowden, *Shakspere—his Mind and Art*, p. 9.

[2] Cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 499.

[3] O. Gilchrist, *An examination of the charges maintained by Malone, Chalmers and others, of Ben Jonson's enmity &c. towards Shakespeare* (1808).

[4] *Proofs of Ben Jonson's Malignity, from the Commentators on Shakspeare* (viz. Malone, Steevens, Chalmers, Weber and S. Jones).

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[1] See, for instance, the allusions to *The Tempest* in the *Induction* to *Bartholomew Fair*; to *Julius Cæsar*, *ib.*, act ii. sc. 1; to the same in the *Induction* to *The Staple of News*; nor need we shrink from adding, to *Richard III*, or perhaps to Shakspere's *Histories* in general, in *The Devil is an Ass*, act ii. sc. 1.

[2] It should be admitted that there is a single passage of which this remark will not hold good. In the *Ode to Himself*, written by Jonson in bitterness of spirit after the failure of his *New Inn* (*vide ante*, p. 320), he says—

'No doubt some mouldy Tale
Like Pericles, and stale
As the shrieve's crusts, and nasty as his fish—
Scraps out of every dish
Thrown forth, and raked into the common tub,
May keep up the Play-club.'

In this and the following stanza it is difficult not to recognise the angry sarcasm of disappointment; but, as has been seen (*ante*, pp. 180 *seqq.*), it is doubtful whether *Pericles* was regarded by contemporaries as a Shaksperean play. That the description contains a certain measure of cruel accuracy does not of course affect the question, though it might be held to justify the exceptional spirit of the invective.

[3] Too much stress needs perhaps not be laid on the circumstance that at the very time of the stage-war in which Jonson and Chapman are supposed to have stood on opposite sides to Marston and Shakspere, they were all contributing in common to Robert Chester's *Love's Martyr*. (Cf. *ante*, p. 31.)

Jonson and Beaumont and Fletcher.

With Beaumont and Fletcher, more especially perhaps with the former, Jonson's personal relations were of the pleasantest kind. That Beaumont assisted him in *Sejanus*, is a very doubtful conjecture; that the 'censure' of Beaumont was sought by Jonson for all his writings, is only a late report; but of Beaumont's boundless enthusiasm for Jonson, and of the affectionate regard returned by the latter, abundant proofs remain. With Fletcher too he exchanged expressions of goodwill [1].

Jonson and his friends and his enemies.

So much as to the relations between Ben Jonson and his contemporaries, as far as the more important of these can be ascertained from the evidence of his sayings and writings. Such a man generally has both warm friends and bitter foes; and as we have seen sufficient proof that he possessed many of the former, so neither did the latter, according to his own declaration, refrain from pressing themselves upon his attention. It was his misfortune to have 'a pair of ears unskilful to hear lies,' or have those things said of him which he could truly prove of 'the slanderers themselves [2].' And so he passed through the manifold conflicts of his life, until at last the sword of that brave soul, bruised and battered and hacked, but not so far as we know ever dishonoured, was sheathed in the peace of the grave.

Some effort is required to turn from the personality of

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[1] See Dyce's *Introduction* to Beaumont and Fletcher's *Works*, p. xxiv; Beaumont's commendatory verses to *Volpone*, *Epicoene*, *Catiline*, Fletcher's to *Catiline*; Beaumont's *Letter to Ben Jonson*; Jonson's lines to Fletcher 'upon his *Faithful Shepherdess*'; his charming lines *To Francis Beaumont* (Epigram lv); and the *Conversations*. And cf. *infra*, chap. vii.

[2] See the striking passage (*De bonis et malis*) in the *Discoveries* (Cunningham's edition, vol. iii. p. 407); and cf. the first speech of Crites in *Cynthia's Revels*, act iii. sc. 2.

His non-dramatic works.

a man whom one seems to know so well, even in order to find him again in his works. Of these, it will be remembered, only a part—although by far the most important part—can be here surveyed. Yet of many of the characteristics of Ben Jonson and of his genius a complete view can only be gained by those who, after studying his dramas and masques and the lyric and other non-dramatic elements (shall I say including the didactic ?) contained in them, have some attention to spare for his other remaining productions, both in verse and in prose. As regards the former, it was in accordance with aspirations to which he more than once gave expression that he should have hoped to find leisure for compositions in what seemed to him nobler because freer forms of poetry. But he never, so far as is known, carried out the intention mentioned by him to Drummond, of writing an epic poem entitled *Heroologia, or the Worthies of this Country roused by Fame*, to be dedicated to his country; nor is any other original poem of length or importance extant from his hand. His Aristotelian notes for his translation of Horace's *Art of Poetry* perished with his library; but the *Translation* itself—scarcely a masterpiece of its kind—survives, as well as a few other slighter *Translations from the Latin Poets*, which have no high poetic merit[1]. His *Epigrams* on the other hand, which he termed 'the ripest of his studies,' deserve this preference, especially if it is remembered that Jonson's notion of an epigram was not of the limited kind usual in modern literature, but rather corresponded to Martial's, as defined by F. A. Paley[2]. Their felicitous terseness often satisfies more restricted definitions of wit ; nor are they lacking in that freedom of spirit which was among Jonson's most distinctive moral qualities. In the collection called *The Forest* and in the larger collection called *Underwoods* will be found examples of the various poetic styles of which he was capable, including epistles and other adaptations of classical forms of notable excellence, together with epitaphs that have been rarely surpassed in grace as well as in force, and even a short series of pleasing love-poems—under the title of *A Celebration of Charis*. Among his prose-writings few modern readers will turn to the rough draft or materials for his *English Grammar*, of which the manuscript itself perished in the calamity which destroyed the results of so many of his labours[1]. But it would be an error to extend the same neglect to his *Discoveries*—a species of commonplace book of aphorisms suggested by his daily readings—his communings with himself in the solitude of his library, as the *Conversations* were his communings with an auditor to whom after all he revealed less of his own mind than he told to himself. The *Discoveries* are, if I judge this series correctly, full not only of acute observation, but of ripe and true wisdom. By no means confined to remarks on the theory of style and of the literary art (although these are masterly and generally sound), they comprise in addition some very noteworthy remarks on government[2] and education[3]. And upon the whole these aphorisms may be described as anything but egotistical, while they breathe the spirit of a highly-cultivated and nobly self-conscious man of letters, honourably proud of both the utility and the dignity of his own profession. Jonson's moral probe here, as in his best comedies, is very keen and very sure[4].

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[1] Jonson's translation of Barclay's *Argenis*, entered in 1623, would seem never to have been printed. Cf. H. B. Wheatley, *u.s.* p. xxiii.

[2] See as to the objections made to Jonson's style of epigrams, *Epigram* xlix. and cf. 'R. C.'s' *The Times' Whistle* (edited by J. M. Cowper for the *Early English Text Society's Publications*, 1871), *Introduction*, p. xi.

His learning,

The incidental evidence of Ben Jonson's learning, which has already presented itself, will find further illustration in the ensuing survey of his plays. He had recognised the value of study in his youth, and he clung to the habit of it

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[1] Jonson's grammatical studies do not appear to have come to an end with the MS. of his *Grammar*. Howell writes to him, Jan. 27, 1929: 'I cannot yet light upon Dr. Davis's Welsh Grammar; before Christmas I am promised one. So desiring you to look better hereafter to your Charcoal-Fire and Chimney, which I am glad to be one that preserved it from burning, this being the second time that Vulcan hath threatened you, it may be because you have spoken ill of his wife,' &c.

[2] Jonson was a supporter of the principle of monarchy based on popular affection, and of course a bitter adversary of mob-rule.

[3] See the passage—very English in spirit—advocating public-school education.

[4] See in particular the Notes entitled *Ingeniorum Discrimina*.

memory. through life, till his learning had become part of him[1]. His unusually powerful memory[2] no doubt stood him in good stead in the course of his labours. Yet, notwithstanding the fact that one of his plays was written in fifteen days, *and probable method of work.* one would imagine him to have been a slow worker. The fact that he wrote all his verses first in prose is no doubt explained by the reason which he assigned for it, that 'so his Master, Cambden, had learned him.' His theory, concerning which much might be said on either side (indeed Drummond states that Jonson's own remarks on the subject were mutually contradictory), was that 'verses stood by sense without either colour or accent'; and it may be worth while to remember that the most finished of Goethe's dramas were likewise translated from prose into verse[3]. The process at all events illustrates the method of Jonson's literary workmanship, which must have essentially differed from Shakspere's. Indeed, one might almost fancy that the motto which he chose for his arms had reference to his literary labours; for the rest of the conduct of his life, so far as we know of it, reveals little of the principle commended by one of its alternative expressions[4].

His dissipations. The memory of Ben Jonson is perhaps less usually associated with the labours of the library than with the 'lyrick feasts'

> 'Made at the Sun,
> The Dog, the Triple Tun[5],'

the Mermaid, the Devil, or any other haunt of the conviviality of his times. Let us then, if we will, imagine his portly presence (of which he has himself drawn a portrait[1], less flattering than the likeness which his admirers found in him to the illustrious Greek comic poet Menander[2]) in presidential control of a symposium not confined to intercharge of critical opinion; let us fancy him enforcing the most genial of his 'convivial laws,' and towering above all his companions in the contests of wit, and in the flow of verses, which

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[1] 'Such as accustom themselves and are familiar with the best authors shall ever and anon find somewhat of them in themselves' (*Discoveries*). See also the passage *ib.* headed *Imitatio.*

[2] 'I myself could, in my youth, have repeated all that ever I had made, and so continued till I was past forty; since, it is much decayed. Yet I can repeat whole books that I have read, and poems of some selected friends, which I have liked to charge my memory with' (*Discoveries*). Among these he mentions in the *Conversations* Wotton's 'verses of a happie lyfe,' and 'a peice of Chapman's translation of the 13 of the Iliads.'

[3] *Iphigenia* and *Tasso.*

[4] 'His armes were three spindles or *rhombi*; his own word about them, *Percunctabor* or *Perscrutator*' (*Conversations*).

[5] Herrick, *Ode for Ben Jonson.*—A prose description of a Jonsonian supper in his latter days will be found in Howell's letter to Thomas Hawk, April 5, 1636.

> 'Outdid the meat, outdid the frolic wine.'

Let us picture him quaffing more than a single

> 'pure cup of rich Canary wine,'

'which most doth take my Muse and me'; at the risk of exceeding the 'innocence' prescribed by him to his modest domestic hospitality[3]. For there may have been some ground for Drummond's sneer at his love of wine; nor can it have been in his nature to be on occasion less prodigal of his social than of his literary powers. Doubtless it was in such moments that he gave way to some of the weaker sides of his character; to the excess of self-consciousness which made him in 'his merry humor wont to name himself the Poet[4],' to licence of comment, and to intolerance of men and things which he disliked, chiefly because he disliked them. But on the other hand we may credit Herrick's proud assertion that the 'clusters' of associates who acknowledged Jonson as their chief made him and his companions 'nobly wild, not mad'; and again, there was something in his nature which excuses, though it cannot justify, the alternation of violent delights with arduous labours. A passage in the *Discoveries*, which he may or may not have

A self-drawn portrait.

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[1] See the poem, described by him as a 'Picture of himselfe,' sent by him to Drummond (*Conversations*, p. 39). A good point is made of Jonson's size as contrasted with his sensitiveness in *Satiromastix*: 'Thou hast such a villainous broad back, that I warrant th'art able to bear away any man's jests in England.'

[2] See Cleveland's *Ode to Ben Jonson* (Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 389):

> 'Thou art our whole Menander, and dost look
> Like the old Greek.'

[3] See *Epigram* ci, *Inviting a Friend to Supper.*

[4] One is reminded of Dickens' liking (probably only half-ironical) for the epithet of 'the Inimitable,' applied to him, I think, in America.

intended to carry a personal application, but in which he was, I think, consciously or unconsciously describing himself, shall serve as a transition from the preceding sketch of Ben Jonson's personality to his writings, which, in this as in other instances, after all best express the individuality of a true man of letters :

> 'I have known a man vehement on both sides, that knew no mean, either to intermit his studies, or call upon them again. When he hath set himself to writing, he would join night to day, press upon himself without release, not minding it, till he fainted ; and when he left off, resolve himself into all sports and looseness again, that it was almost a despair to draw him to his book ; but once got to it, he grew stronger and more earnest by the ease. His whole powers were renewed ; he would work out of himself what he desired ; but with such excess as his study could not be ruled ; he knew not how to dispose his own abilities, or husband them, he was of that immoderate power against himself. Nor was he only a strong, but an absolute speaker and writer ; but his subtlety did not show itself ; his judgment thought that a vice : for the ambush hurts more than is hid. He never forced his language, nor went out of the highway of speaking, but for some great necessity or apparent profit ; for he denied figures to be invented for ornament, but for aid ; and still thought it an extreme madness to bend or wrest that which ought to be right[1].'

Classification of Jonson's dramatic works.

The dramatic works of Ben Jonson fall with perfect distinctness under the three heads of tragedies, comedies, and masques or entertainments of a similar description. Of his works which have come down to us, the unfinished *Sad Shepherd* alone belongs to a species of a mixed kind—the pastoral drama—and may be considered by itself, intermediately between the comedies and the masques.

Although separated in the dates of their production by

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[1] Apart from any question as to the correctness of the relative critical estimates attempted in the apostrophe, Howell hits the mark when, addressing his 'Father Ben Jonson,' he writes, *s. d.* June 27, 1629, contradicting the letter, but not the spirit, of the last clause of the above extract : 'I find that you have been oftentimes mad ; you were mad when you writ your *Fox* ; and madder when you writ your *Alchemist* ; you were mad when you writ *Catilin*, and stark mad when you writ *Sejanus* ; but when you writ your *Epigrams*, and your *Magnetic Lady*, you were not so mad, insomuch that I perceive there be Degrees of Madness. Excuse me that I am so free with you. The Madness I mean is that divine Fury, that heating and heightening Spirit which Ovid speaks of, *Est Deus in nobis* &c.'—In truth, Jonson's genius was almost uniquely made up of this 'madness' and of a corrective sanity.

Historical tragedies.

a considerable number of years, the two historical tragedies of Ben Jonson are not to be dissociated from one another. The common characteristics of *Sejanus* and *Catiline* consist not only of a laborious and conscientious research which has alternately attracted the admiration and the sneers of critics, but also of a vigour and distinctness of characterisation and a constructive skill rarely to be found united in the tragic plays of any of Ben Jonson's contemporaries. The defect in his historical tragedies which forbids our ranking them by the side of Shakspere's, is a want, not of reality, not of historic perception, not even of dramatic power, but of the presence of that superhuman light which flashes into sudden clearness the unbridged distances, and in a moment reveals the hill-tops and the valleys, the jutting crags and the cavernous recesses of human nature[1]. These mighty surprises are foreign to the poetic genius of Ben Jonson.

Neither *Sejanus*, which was first acted at the Globe Theatre in 1603, Shakspere taking a part in it, and which experienced an unfavourable reception from the popular part of the audience, nor *Catiline*, received in a similar way on its first production in 1611, is a work to be fully appreciated at once or without some degree of preparation. With his usual fierceness towards incompetent judges, Ben Jonson in publishing the latter play, informed the 'reader in ordinary' that 'men judge only out of knowledge,' and submitted his tragedy to the 'reader extraordinary' alone. But although it may be difficult to discard the consciousness of some previous knowledge of the subject in considering a work of this sort, the disfavour with which both *Sejanus* and *Catiline* were at first received may be safely set down as an intrinsic error of judgment; since, although the full merits of these plays can hardly be apparent except to the classical student, their dramatic power alone ought to have ensured their immediate, as in point of fact it did their subsequent, success.

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[1] It must be conceded to Gifford that there is no proof, nor even any probability, of Shakspere's having been the 'happy genius' who contributed to the play of *Sejanus* acted passages of his own invention, which were afterwards conscientiously expunged by Ben Jonson on sending the play to the press. (Gifford thinks Fletcher more likely.) *Sejanus*, as we have it, certainly contains no passages in the slightest degree suggesting the Shaksperean touch, except perhaps the first lines of the speech of Arruntius, act iv. sc. 5.

Sejanus his Fall (acted 1603).

The educated reader, while deprecating for himself the designation of an 'extraordinary' one, will I think be inclined to prefer the earlier and less widely known of these two historical tragedies to its successor. And this, not because *Sejanus his Fall* is for the benefit of scholars (and who but such has ever been known to verify a reference?) freighted with a heavy cargo of classical quotations giving chapter and verse for every turn in the action and phrase upon phrase in the dialogue. The apparatus in question Jonson[1] defends as being, not an affectation of a kind which he 'abhors,' but necessary as evidence of his own integrity in the conduct of the story. It was in fact his way of crushing the critics, who had accused him of plagiarism, and whom in *The Poetaster*, acted two years before *Sejanus*, he had in vain endeavoured to expose[2]. But the commentary is in fact *de trop* for the educated reader, who on such occasions rather prefers to recognise than to be directly reminded; while for the uneducated it is, to say the least, useless. Genuine admiration, however, is challenged by the success with which the tragic dramatist has solved one of the most difficult problems of its kind known to historical students. Gifford has well observed that this drama might have been more appositely entitled the Triumph of Tiberius than the *Fall of Sejanus*; and in the developement of the character of the Emperor lies in truth the chief interest of this remarkable work. Jonson's character of Tiberius, whether or not it be a correct historical interpretation, is a psychological masterpiece, and not the less so because of the incomparable materials which Tacitus had furnished to the dramatist[3]. A single hitch interferes with the consistency of the conception. That in his old age Tiberius should have sunk into a victim or 'trophy' of degraded lust, is even less adequately accounted for in the play than it is as a historical relation. One modern historical critic has been found to doubt it altogether; more judiciously, Merivale accepts the charges of Tacitus and Suetonius, supported as they are by the traditions and relics of Capri, but insists that the age and the class to which Tiberius belonged must bear their share of the common guilt [1]. The objection to Jonson's introduction of this phase of the unhappy Emperor's character and conduct lies in the absence of all preparation for it in the previous course of the drama [2]. In other respects, the conception of Tiberius as the incarnate hypocrisy of tyranny masquerading in popular and legal forms is, as I have said, masterly. Nor should it be forgotten that such an attempt to delineate a complex character of historical antiquity was to all intents and purposes new to our dramatic literature. The *Julius Caesar* of Shakspere, which had preceded *Sejanus*, is weak where the latter is strong; and no later Elisabethan has achieved a parallel success in the same field [3].

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[1] See the address *To The Readers* prefixed to the play.

[2] See act v. sc. 1 *et al.*; cf. Koeppel, *u. s.*, p. 8.

[3] This opinion is not universally held. Mr. A. H. Bullen contrasts *Sejanus* unfavourably with the fine anonymous *Tragedie of Nero* (1624), which is printed in vol. i. of his *Collection of Old English Plays* (1882), and must be distinguished from *The Tragedy of Tiberius Claudius Nero*, printed in 1607

Jonson's skill was, however, in *Sejanus* far from confined to an adequate reproduction of his materials, though the manner in which he combined them reflects the highest credit on his untiring ingenuity. The whole picture of the tyrant's mind is unfolded in a few admirably-devised scenes; and the ingenuity with which in the letter containing the doom of Sejanus the dramatist supplements and completes the historical account is a most noteworthy instance of inventive boldness and of a firm constructive hand[1].

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[1] *History of the Romans under the Empire*, ch. xlvi.—The other writer referred to is the late Adolf Stahr, to whom paradox was second nature.

[2] The 'decreed delights' of the Emperor's retirement are quite suddenly mentioned in *Sejanus*, act iii. sc. 3.—By a slip of a kind very unusual with him, Jonson has applied Tacitus' mention of Tiberius' secret debaucheries at *Rhodes* to the later period of his life (act iv. sc. 4), and has thus missed an opportunity for preparing his later self-degradation.

[3] Nearest perhaps (Shakspere's later Roman tragedies apart)—but *longo intervallo*—stands the Domitian of Massinger's *Roman Actor*.—What the dramatic elaboration of the Tacitean conception of Tiberius implies, may be realised by those who call to mind the dramatic crudities which in modern days have sought to solve on the stage the problem of Cromwell's character, assuming (as for their purpose they had a right to assume) hypocrisy to have been the dominant element in it.

For the character and fate of Sejanus himself Jonson has found the true key in treating his impious insolence as the supreme reason of his fall, and thus assigning to it a tragic cause beyond the jealous fears of the despot. He says, at the very moment when Nemesis is upon him:

'Of all the throng that fill th' Olympian hall,
And, without pity, lade poor Atlas' back,
I know not that one deity, but Fortune,
To whom I would throw up, in begging smoke,
One grain of incense, or whose ear I'd buy
With thus much oil . . .
To her I care not, if, for satisfying
Your scrupulous phant'sies, I go offer[2];'

and the effective scene in the *sacellum*, where Sejanus after an ill-omened sacrifice overturns the image of even this unpropitious deity, is introduced with admirable skill to point the moral to the dullest apprehension[3]. In some of the minor characters Jonson has distinguished with consummate skill the various kinds of servility and resistance; on the ample outspokenness of Arruntius, a personage who reminds us of similar figures in Jonson's comedies, he has evidently dwelt with special love. The scene between Livia and her confidential attendant Eudemus, who combines the professions of physician, perfumer, and pimp, is an admirable interfusion of classical lore with satire applicable to Jonson's own age. The entire play is steeped in an atmosphere of vivid truthfulness, so that the reader feels transplanted among the miserable victims and the more miserable agents of a period when the consciousness of what Rome had been was still struggling with the conviction of what she had become; among the timid and selfish senators, the vile rhetoricians and provocative agents, and the few noble spirits whose despair lay in a comparison between the present and the past, while their consolation, as we are shown in the finely-drawn character of the historian Cremutius Cordus, was a trustful hope in the justice of posterity[1].

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[1] Objection has, however, been taken, and I think justly, to the perverted application in this letter (act v. sc. 10) of the famous exordium of the Tacitean original (*Annal.* vi. 6). Justly, not because Jonson was debarred from making any use he chose to make of it; but because the bitter force of the real meaning of the words is weakened by the more commonplace use here made of them; the saying was too famous and too characteristic to be introduced in any but its real sense.

[2] Act v. sc. 1.

[3] Act v. sc. 4. A scene which Coleridge calls 'unspeakably irrational.'

The moral of *Sejanus* may be said to be drawn in the observations headed *Tyranni.—Sejanus* in the *Discoveries* (cf. Cunningham, vol. iii. p. 405). It was a political moral perhaps more needed in the age in which the play was produced than any other. Hazlitt, by the way (writing in 1820), declares himself 'half afraid to give any extracts' from *Sejanus*, 'lest they should be tortured into an application to other times and characters than those referred to by the poet.' Curiously enough, this tragedy of a favourite's fall was (in 1616) dedicated by Ben Jonson to one who was himself the son of a fallen favourite (Aubigny).

A testimony, unique in its way, to the reputation of Jonson's *Sejanus* in the Restoration age, is furnished by the performance of a German translation of it, by an Englishman of the name of John Michael Girish, at the Court of the Elector Palatine Charles Lewis in Heidelberg, some time between the years 1663 and 1671[2]. Charles Lewis, the eldest son of Elisabeth of Bohemia, had the true Stuart love for the theatre and its literature. This German version, which is for the most part prose, contains several passages in the common metre so largely employed by Opitz and his contemporaries; it should, however, be observed that there is a large element of rime in the original. It is clear that Jonson's play was the original of Girish's version, and not either Magnon's French tragedy *Seianus*, printed at Paris in 1647, or van Rossum's Dutch *Aelius Seianus*, 1666[3].

Catiline his Conspiracy (*acted* 1611).

The greater measure of popularity achieved, though not at the outset, by Jonson's second historical tragedy, *Catiline his Conspiracy*, produced in 1611 at a time when Jonson's fortunes were under something of an eclipse[1], may, I think, be said to have attended it in the reading world of later ages. The general treatment of the theme in the later play much resembles that in the earlier, differing where it does to its disadvantage as more archaic; and if Mr. Swinburne is right in considering *Sejanus* 'a magnificent mistake,' he cannot be wrong in judging *Catiline* to prove nothing more than that Jonson 'could do better, but not much better, on the same rigid lines' as those of the earlier play. Yet the choice of subject is the first element in the success of a play; and the attempt and fall of *Catiline* form a theme which, like the death of Caesar or the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, has established itself in the memory of the world as one of the typically impressive crimes of general history[2]. The subject had accordingly already been more than once treated on the English stage. Stephen Gosson's tragedy of *Catiline's Conspiracies* has been already noted[3] as singled out for commendation by the author himself; and Robert Wilson and Henry Chettle had likewise produced a tragedy under the same title, possibly a revised version of Gosson's play. Jonson however, as was usual with him, went to the fountain-head; and the sources of his *Catiline* are the classical authors, more particularly of course Sallust and Cicero, whom he had studied with the most conscientious diligence. But this play too abounds with numerous proofs that the 'cothurnus' of Jonson was as 'learned' as his 'sock'; he loved incidental illustrations of the classical knowledge in which he was steeped, while Shakspere only used the classics, or translations of the classics, as direct materials[1].

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[1] See act iii. sc. 2.

[2] See J. Bolte, *Ben Jonson's Sejanus am Heidelberger Hofe*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xxiv. (1889). The references to a *Sejanus*-performance in the correspondence of the inimitable Elisabeth Charlotte of Orleans are here brought home to the version of Jonson's tragedy mentioned in the text.

[3] Bolte also mentions two contemporary Italian operas on the subject by N. Minato and A. Draghi. He notes, for completeness' sake, a Dutch tragedy on Sejanus by van der Zande (1718), and I may add that A. Chénier wrote a *Tibère*, which appears never to have been acted.

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[1] Mr. Fleay directs attention to the significant phrase in the two lines 'To the Reader Extraordinary': 'places in court go otherwise.'

[2] Schlegel, it may be observed, prefers *Sejanus* to *Catiline*, and Hazlitt seems to have been of the same opinion.

[3] Vide *ante*, vol. i. p. 209. Mr. Wheatley appears to hold that this was the play seen by Pepys on December 19, 1668. But surely it was Jonson's, which was also that which he mentioned as 'talked of,' December 11, 1667. —Collier, vol. i. p. 260, mentions a play produced in Gray's Inn Hall at Christmas 1587-8, 'of which Catiline was probably the hero.'—Voltaire's *Catilina*—with its conflict of public and private emotions in the bosom of Aurelia, and its conclusion introducing Caesar as a *deus ex machinâ*— has no connexion with so historical and dramatic a work as Ben Jonson's.—With a tragedy *Catiline* by Croly (1822) I am unacquainted. It is praised by Genest, vol. x. p. 236.

Catiline is only less interesting than *Sejanus*, because it presents no such difficult problem of characterisation as Tiberius. Within the limits of his subject, however, Jonson has fully availed himself of his opportunities. Each of the characters, notably those of the conspirators, stands out distinctly from the rest; perhaps in his effort to draw distinctly, the dramatist has, after his manner, rather overdrawn the humours, thereby impairing the humanity, of his personages,—the visionary imbecility of Lentulus[2], the braggadocio of Cethegus[3], the savage ferocity of Catiline. On the other hand, the oratorical expansiveness of Cicero is delicately, though copiously, illustrated; the danger is avoided of rendering him ridiculous, although both his love of speech and his respect for his own achievements are allowed ample expression. Of Caesar and of Cato enough is hardly made; the key to the double-handed policy of the former is not clearly revealed, while the latter appears too generally as the mere echo of Cicero[4]. The female characters of the play are drawn with a humour nothing less than exuberant. Jonson had acquired a thorough insight into the causes of Roman degeneracy; and there is masterly satire in his pictures of the wanton Fulvia and of the vain Sempronia, puffed up with her knowledge of Greek and her belief in woman's right to take part in political 'movements.' Indeed, the dialogue between these two ladies, and that between Fulvia and her maid, are admirable examples of high comedy[1].

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[1] In act iii. sc. 1, Jonson is not correct in speaking of 'broken images of ancestors,' for the *imagines* which Cicero declares himself to be without were of wax. And is it not an error to make Catiline (act i. sc. 1) say that he
'stood candidate
To be commander in the Pontic War'?

[2] This however is admirable (act iii. sc. 3):

'*Lentulus:* I like not fire,
'Twill too much waste my city.'

[3] 'What a strange notion,' says Coleridge, p. 281, 'Ben must have formed of a determined, remorseless, all-daring foolhardiness, to have represented it in such a mouthing Tamburlane, and bombastic tongue-bully as this Cethegus of his.'

[4] Except of course in the (historical) passage of the debate on the fate of the conspirators.

Though the Ciceronian and other speeches in this play are of great length, they are condensed and pointed to the course of the dramatic action with remarkable skill; it is only in the closing narrative of Petreius that the author permits himself a quite independent flight of poetic description. While it cannot be denied that the effect of the narrative is adequate to the occasion—for it imparts tragic dignity to a catastrophe which, in accordance with the sequence of historical events reproduced in the play, is but subsidiary to the termination of its main action—the method of its introduction recalls Seneca, of whom other devices adopted in *Catiline* show Jonson to have been an attentive student. The Ghost of Sulla speaks what resembles a prologue to the play; and between the acts are inserted so-called choruses, lyrical meditations 'spoken,' as Gifford correctly observes, 'by no one, and addressed to no one.' Their literary merit, which has, I think, been underrated, lies in the notable terseness of their diction, which is accommodated to a variety of chiefly short and partly unusual metres[2]. Yet, notwithstanding this return to a model which belongs to an earlier period of our drama, I cannot but think the dialogue of *Catiline* superior in form to that of *Sejanus*, where the interrupted and unfinished sentences too frequently occur.

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[1] Inveighing against Cicero, Sempronia says:

'And we must glorify
A mushroom! one of yesterday! a fine speaker!
'Cause he has sucked at Athens! and advance him,
To our own loss! No, Fulvia; there are they
Can speak Greek too, if need were. Caesar and I
Have sat upon him; so hath Crassus too,
And others. We have all decreed his rest,
For rising farther.'

The 'Caesar and I' is inimitable. Immediately afterwards her 'learned ladyship' enquires: 'Is this gray powder a good dentifrice?' 'You see I use it,' replies Fulvia, who likewise has her self-consciousness, and in fact afterwards saves Rome, as it were *en passant*, to avenge herself upon her rival.—I cannot help pointing out a sly touch of humour in act iii. sc. 2, where Curius, reclaimed to loyalty by Cicero in the presence of Fulvia, assures him:

'Most noble consul, I am yours and hers,
I mean my country's.'

[2] The chorus following act ii is in double stanzas of the metre made familiar to modern English ears by *In Memoriam*.

The Fall of Mortimer (fragment).

No other tragedy from Jonson's pen is extant. We know nothing of the *Robert II, King of Scots*, which Henslowe, in 1599, mentions as written by him in conjunction with Dekker, Chettle, and others; nor of the *Richard Crookback*, which according to the same authority he had in preparation in 1602[1]. Of *The Fall of Mortimer* he left behind him a fragment, consisting of the *Dramatis Personae*, the *Argument*, and part of the opening scene of the play. From the *Argument* it appears that his intention was to introduce at the close of the first four acts, at all events, choruses of different groups of personages commenting on events and characters belonging to the play. It is possible that *The Fall of Mortimer* was the play of which the plot was shown by Jonson to Henslowe's company in December, 1597, and also that of which Chapman had written two acts in October, 1598, 'on Benjamin's plot[2].' If so, Mr. Fleay is certainly right in correcting Gifford's statement that in this relic we have 'the last draught of Jonson's quill.' The fragment was expanded into a tragedy, entitled *The Fall of Mortimer*, in 1731, with a political purpose, but would not seem to have gone beyond rehearsal. In 1762, John Wilkes published a dedication with a similar design, either to the original fragment or to the play[3].

Comedies.

Of Jonson's comedies the dates are, with two exceptions, established with certainty; and as the two plays are in point of time the first and the third, or the first and the second, of his extant dramatic works, it becomes possible to discuss this the most important[4] group of them in chronological order—no slight advantage in the case of so conscientious a writer.

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[1] See *Diary*, ed. Collier, pp. 156, 223.

[2] See Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. i. pp. 56 and 356.

[3] The play of 1731 was regarded as an attack upon Walpole, and probably upon Queen Caroline, and was, in the presentment of the Middlesex Grand Jury, described as a scandalous and seditious libel. (Doran, *London in the Jacobite Times*, vol. ii. pp. 43-4.) Wilkes' slanders were directed against the Princess Dowager of Wales and Lord Bute. (Cf. Stanhope's *History of England*, ch. xxxviii.)

[4] Hazlitt, I should imagine, stands alone in his opinion that 'Ben Jonson's serious productions are superior to his comic ones.'

It is extremely improbable that *The Case is Altered*, which is mentioned by Nashe in his *Lenten Stuff*, published in 1599, preceded *Every Man in his Humour*; but the place of honour may in any case be given to the last-named comedy, whether or not the date of its production is to be assigned to the year 1597 or to 1598.

For *Every Man in his Humour* is justly recognised by most critics as a work which is not only one of the happiest efforts of its author, but also holds a place peculiar to itself in our dramatic literature. It may, in a word, be regarded as the first important comedy of character proper produced on the English stage. I have elsewhere[1] given my reasons for not applying this designation to the earlier comedies of Shakspere; *The Merchant of Venice*, which probably preceded Jonson's play in date, may be regarded as hovering on the boundary-line between comedy of character and comedy of incident; and the date of the earlier version of *The Merry Wives*, to which I should certainly be inclined to give the former designation, is at least uncertain. A further literary significance attaches to *Every Man in his Humour* from the fact that a large proportion of it is in prose, for which Ben Jonson, following the example of Lyly, thus asserted a right on the comic stage which was in the end to become a prerogative.

Every Man in his Humour (first acted 1598 or 1597).

Every Man in his Humour was consciously designed by its author to satisfy the demands made upon comedy by the Greek philosopher who established its theory, and to exclude all elements which might interfere with the accomplishment of this purpose. In the Prologue he accordingly points out his intention to abstain from seeking to delight the audience by following the fashion of the day and courting applause by a history inadequately eked out by noise and creaking machinery, and to produce instead a play corresponding to the true object of comedy, which is

> 'To sport with human follies, not with crimes.'

He promises to be alike observant of the limits thus imposed upon him by the demands of his art, and true to human nature. Taking advantage of the prevailing fancy for applying, whether in or out of season, the term 'humours' to oddities or novelties of conduct, manners, or fashion, he with the help of this word classifies a series of dramatic figures whose mental or moral characteristics, themselves decisively marked, stand out still more distinctly by the force of contrast [1]. The plot which holds the action together is indeed slight—perhaps too slight—but it serves; and, so far as has been ascertained, it is perfectly original. The personages are all thoroughly real, and yet, with an art most notable in a beginner, are kept very distinct from one another. Foremost among them is the immortal Captain Bobadil, a military braggart *sui generis*—quite distinct, for instance, from Falstaff or Ancient Pistol, or from any other type that might be brought into comparison [2]. The scene in which Bobadil's ragged pride is brought to a fall [3] has few rivals in English comedy. The jealous usurer Kitely is, to my mind, a less interesting dramatic character. Among the minor personages pre-eminence should be allowed to Master Stephen, the country-gull, and Master Mathew, the town-gull, together with the famous water-carrier Cob, one of the best clowns of an advanced type in our drama.

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[1] *Ante*, pp. 275-6.

In this play, as first printed in the quarto of 1601, doubtless without the authorisation of its writer, the names of the characters were Italian. It is easy to understand why they should have been Anglicised for stage use before they appeared in this form in the folio of 1616; for, as a comedy of manners, *Every Man in his Humour* is redolent of London life in its varied aspects, and of the language of oaths indigenous to the same soil. Less easy to understand than the change adverted to is the omission in the folio of the fine burst in praise of poesy, which shows the spirit of Jonson to have been in harmony with those of Spenser and Milton [1]. Of course this may have been a mere stage-cut,—a process which explains everything. The *Prologue*, on the other hand, the self-assertiveness of which exhibits another phase of Jonson, was first printed in the folio edition.

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[1] See the discussion of this subject *ap.* Wheatley, *u. s.*, *Introduction*, pp. xxx-xxxiv. The usage of our language has on the whole declined to sanction the endeavour of Jonson and other writers contemporary with him—including Bacon—to impart to the word 'humours' a deeper significance, founded no doubt on a venerable medical theory. (See the passage cited below from the *Induction* to *Every Man out of his Humour*.)

[2] Ancient Pistol is a mere modification of the regular Italian (and New Comedy) type of the *thraso*; in Falstaff the military element is merely incidental; the conception of Bobadil has been well defined as 'the coward, assuming the dignity of calm courage.' See T. Davies, *Dramatic Miscellanies*, vol. ii. p. 54, where it is observed that on Bobadil Congreve founded his Captain Bluffe in *The Old Bachelor*.

[3] Act iv. sc. 5.

Every Man in his Humour has been described as 'the last of Jonson's plays to quit the stage.' Revived with considerable success in the Restoration period, with an Epilogue by Dorset, it was produced in a revised form in 1725; and again, with a scene of his own addition, by Garrick in 1751; and Kitely became one of his famous parts in comedy [2]. It was occasionally seen on the public stage during the first quarter of the present century; and one of the most famous of amateur actors—Charles Dickens—is still remembered as an 'inimitable' Captain Bobadil. Literary critics have, as a rule, followed the popular taste in preferring this comedy to its companion piece [3]; yet some of their author's peculiar merits as a dramatist shine at least as conspicuously in *Every Man out of his Humour* as in its predecessor; and from both a biographical and a critical point of view the later play may perhaps lay claim to even superior interest.

Every Man out of his Humour acted 1599.

In execution as well as in conception *Every Man out of his Humour* is by far the more elaborate of the pair. The central idea of the play may be termed a philosophical one: viz. that every humour is curable by its own excess. In order that this notion may be consistently worked out, it is of course necessary that it should be clearly understood what meaning the author attaches to the term 'humour';

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[1] Its place is in act v. sc. 1, where Edward Knowell in the folio says: 'Sir, you have saved me the trouble of a defence' (of poetry).

[2] See Genest, vol. iii. p. 166, and vol. iv. pp. 342-3; and cf. as to Garrick, Davies, *u. s.*, vol. ii. p. 64.

[3] There is no notice in Genest of *Every Man out of his Humour* having been performed since 1682.

it is accordingly defined with great distinctness, while the fashionable abuse of the term is protested against[1]. As he employs the term, it is virtually equivalent to a ruling peculiarity of character, of a ridiculous kind. This play accordingly most emphatically deserves the designation of a comedy of character; in fact, the author intended that it should furnish a clear proof of what he could achieve in this direction; and the framework of the piece, as well as the additions which it received on publication, emphatically challenged, upon a definite issue, the critical judgment of the wise among audience and readers. First, we have in the play, as it lies before us, a sort of *catalogue raisonné* of the characters, described with the pregnant force in which Jonson excelled. Then, in the Induction, designed to make clear the author's standpoint to the audience, he introduces a poet, Asper, who discourses on his aims as a writer; and after a fashion not indeed invented on the stage by Jonson[1], but henceforth frequently resorted to by him, we are likewise made acquainted with two critics, Cordatus and Mitis, who accompany the entire progress of the play with a running comment of observations[2]. To be sure, the business of

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[1] The passage is lengthy, but may be quoted here, as I shall have frequent occasion to return to the conception involved, which in fact lies at the root of the distinction between comedies (or novels) of *character* and of *manners*.

'*Asp.* Why, humour, as 'tis *ens*, we thus define it,
To be a quality of air, or water,
And in itself holds these two properties,
Moisture and fluxure: as, for demonstration,
Pour water on this floor, 'twill wet and run:
Likewise the air, forced through a horn or trumpet,
Flows instantly away, and leaves behind
A kind of dew; and hence we do conclude,
That whatsoe'er hath fluxure and humidity,
As wanting power to contain itself,
Is humour. So in every human body
The choler, melancholy, phlegm, and blood,
By reason that they flow continually
In some one part, and are not continent,
Receive the name of humours. Now thus far
It may, by metaphor, apply itself
Unto the general disposition:
As when some one peculiar quality
Doth so possess a man, that it doth draw
All his effects, his spirits, and his powers,
In their confluxions, all to run one way,
This may be truly said to be a humour.
But that a rook, by wearing a pyed feather,
The cable hat-band, or the three-piled ruff,
A yard of shoe-tye, or the Switzer's knot
On his French garters, should affect a humour,
O, it is more than most ridiculous.'

The supposed physical and physiological analogies in the above may go for what they are worth; but what is quite evident from this passage and the context is, that while the term 'humours' was applied to eccentricities of *manners* by the fashion of the day, Jonson desired to apply it to distinctions of *character* of sufficient significance to be each typical of its kind. Similarly, Shadwell says in the *Epilogue* to *The Humourists*, cited in Scott's *Dryden*, vol. x. pp. 456-7:

'A humour is the bias of the mind,
By which with violence 'tis one way inclined;
It makes our actions lean on one side still,
And in all changes that way bends the will.'

Of course, as a comic poet, Jonson confined himself to such types of character as are ridiculous; otherwise there is a general resemblance between his notion of a ruling humour and Pope's idea of the *Ruling* or *Master-Passion*:

'Cast and mingled with man's very frame,
The Mind's disease, its *Ruling Passion* came:
Each vital humour which should feed the whole,
Soon flows to this, in body and in soul:

Whatever warms the heart, or fills the head,
As the mind opens, and its functions spread,
Imagination plies her dang'rous art,
And pours it all upon the peccant part.'

Essay on Man, Ep. ii. 137 *seqq.*; and cf. *Moral Essays*. Ep. i. 174 *seqq.* On turning to Mr. Mark Pattison's (Clarendon Press) edition of the *Essay on Man* (p. 93) I find the following passage cited from Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* (bk. i), which perfectly illustrates the analogy of the conceptions of Ben Jonson and Pope: 'Neither is it sufficient to inform ourselves in men's ends and natures of the variety of these only, but also of the predominancy, what *humour* reigneth most, and what end is principally sought.'—As to the abuse of the word common in the period of the production of the play, Gifford recalls a passage in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (act i. sc. 1), which comedy may in its earlier form have preceded Jonson's.

[1] We have already met with an instance of it in Nashe's *Summer's Last Will and Testament* (1592). (Cf. *ante*, p. 230.) The idea may be described as a combination of the uses made by the Greeks of the ordinary chorus and of the parabasis respectively.

[2] George Colman the Younger, in his *Random Records* (1830), vol. ii. pp. 2-3 and *note*, is therefore not quite correct in asserting that the device of 'driving characters in a drama beyond the boundaries of the Stage, and transporting the actors of them over the Orchestra,' re-employed in his father's *Manager in Distress* (1780: and other later plays), was in substance merely an old trick revived from Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour*, *The Staple of News*, and *The Magnetic Lady*, and from Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*.

Cordatus is to expound the poet's reasons for his dramatic procedure, while that of Mitis (who it must be said thoroughly deserves his name) is merely to urge objections in order at once to accept the refutation of them.

The action of the play itself is slight, but sufficient for its purpose; so that although *Every Man out of his Humour* was termed by its author a 'comical satire,' there seems no warrant for describing it, with Schlegel, as 'a rhapsody of ridiculous scenes without connexion or progress.' On the contrary, as bringing together a large variety of characters and contriving to apply to one and all of them the same kind of purge, it cannot but be said to be arranged with great skilfulness. But the strength of the play of course lies in the characters themselves. All these are admirable —from Macilente, the envious man, and Carlo Buffone, the brutal cynic, to Puntarvolo, the pseudo-romantic knight, Fastidious Brisk, the empty fool of fashion [1], and Fungoso of the Temple, his still emptier imitator. We have, besides, Fallace, the silly City lady, and her doting spouse Deliro [2], and Saviolina, the too-clever-by-half lady of the Court, with Sordido, the usurious corn-merchant, and his rustic brother Sogliardo, whom Shift, a queer Jack-of-all-trades, instructs in the fashionable art of 'taking tobacco [3].' All these are drawn to the life, so that the whole presents a picture of manners as well as of character unsurpassed in its vivacity and truthfulness. In aim the comedy is truly moral; and if in many passages the author displays no small measure of self-complacency, he must be allowed to have done enough and more than enough to warrant the satisfaction with which he evidently regarded what is one of the masterpieces of English comic literature. The learning of Ben Jonson is very amply exhibited in this play, which abounds with reminiscences from the classics and from Erasmus.

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[1] I cannot help remarking on the one-sidedness of Schlegel's criticism, who thinks Osrick in *Hamlet* an eternal type, Fastidious Brisk a transitory caricature.

[2] Deliro is mentioned in Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621), p. 44 (edn. 1676), as a type of dotage of which examples are to be met with in every province and city.

[3] Shift's profession is described as 'skeldring and odling.' The latter term I cannot, any more than Gifford or Nares, refer to any known origin; but '*skeldring*,' which they define as swindling, and which, Gifford says, seems principally used of mendicants pretending to have been soldiers, I should be strongly inclined to derive from the name of the river *Schelde*. (The term occurs several times in *The Poetaster*.)

An element of personal intention may be supposed to have found its way into the characters of this play; but I am not prepared to follow Mr. Fleay[1] in his endeavours to bring home Jonson's satire in this comedy to particular literary contemporaries. Although he evidently had himself in mind in the personage of Asper, what is there beyond more or less happy guess-work in the suggestion that 'Cordatus and Mitis may be Donne and Chapman'? On the other hand, there can be little doubt but that personal indignation or animosity lent force to the conception of Carlo Buffone, the 'public, scurrilous and prophane jester,' in whose 'respect,' as the preliminary analysis admirably puts it, 'they stand highest whom he studies most to reproach[2].' Mr. Fleay is convinced that the original is Dekker; but this hardly suits an allusion to the character made by that dramatist himself in a play produced three years later, when the quarrel between himself and Jonson was in full blaze[3].

The Case is Altered (acted by 1599).

The date of *The Case is Altered* must lie between the latter part of 1598 and 1599; it was, as has been already seen, in existence in the latter year, when it was explicitly mentioned by Nashe[4], and an allusion has been traced in it to Meres' *Palladis Tamia*, published in 1598[5]. It was performed by the Children of the Queen's Revels at the Blackfriars; and this might tend to fix its date in the summer[1], and therefore add another reason for supposing it to have been produced in 1599. Its relation in date to *Every Man out of his Humour* cannot be established.

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[1] *English Drama*, vol. i. pp. 359 *seqq.*

[2] Jonson at least plays with the natural supposition that such was the case. See act v. sc. 4: 'Whom should he personate in this, signior?' 'Faith, I know not, sir; observe, observe him.'

[3] See the last scene of act v. of *Satiromastix*, where Horace is obliged to swear never henceforth, when supping in taverns, 'to fling Epigrams, Embleames, or Play-speeches about him (lyke Hayle-stones) . . . upon payne to sit at the vpper ende of the Table, a' th' left hand of Carlo Buffon.'

[4] In *Lenten Stuffe* (*Works*, ed. Grosart, vol. v. p. 299), where a riddle is commended as 'right of the merry coblers cutte in that witty play of *The Case is Altered*.'

[5] Onion says to Antonio, who is intended for Anthony Munday: 'You are in print already for the best plotter.' Collier, vol. i. p. 342; cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 432.—The relation in date to *Every Man in his Humour* therefore depends on the question whether the latter was first acted in 1597 or in 1598.

The Case is Altered[2], however, by no means represents an advance upon the two comedies already noticed. It is essentially a comedy of intrigue, based on two plays of Plautus, the *Captivi* and the *Aulularia*, the plots of which are interwoven with some ingenuity. This play of Jonson's cannot therefore be said strongly to display the peculiar characteristics of his dramatic genius, being rather a romantic comedy in Shakspere's earlier manner, although in general devoid of poetic afflatus. Yet there were opportunities for poetic pathos both in the faithful love of Rachel for Paulo—that offering itself in the fine scene, act v. sc. 3, not being, I think, allowed to pass unused by the author,—and in the friendship of Chamont and Camillo. The character of the miser Jaques is a mere copy, and immeasurably inferior to Molière's Harpagon, a later reproduction of the same type[3]. The comic personages (Juniper, Onion, Pacue) are uninteresting, though the cobbler Juniper appears to have become popular. On the whole, the character-drawing is slight; thus, little is made of the difference between the sister *qui*

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[1] The King's Players acted at the Blackfriars in the winter, when the Globe was shut; and Collier therefore (vol. i. p. 342) thinks it probable that the Children acted in the former in the summer, when the house was unoccupied by the King's Players.

[2] The title of the play was a proverbial expression. Cf. *Soliman and Perseda*, act ii, where Piston, in difficulty concerning the gold chain, and the trouble to which it may bring him, says: 'Ay, marry, sir, then the case is alter'd; ay, and halter'd too.' The same not very choice pun is to be found in Lyly's *Mother Bombie* (act v. sc. 3): 'O, ho, the case is altered! goe thither then, and be haltered for me.' The phrase repeatedly occurs in Thomas Heywood's plays, and is also to be met with in Chapman, Massinger, and Shirley.

[3] The obvious reminiscence of Shylock and Jessica in the scene between Jaques and his daughter Rachel (act ii. sc. 1) has been already pointed out. (Cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 346, *note*). See also the miser's lamentation (act v. sc. 3):

> 'Angels! ay, where? mine angels! where's my gold?
> Why, Rachel! O thou thievish cannibal!
> Thou eat'st my flesh in stealing of my gold.'

pleure and the sister *qui rit*—the latter of whom is but a faint shadow—or anticipation—of Beatrice[1].

One character in this play is, however, noteworthy, as intended to satirise a contemporary dramatist. 'Antonio Balladino, pageant poet,' is palpably, as has been noted, to be identified with Anthony Munday; so that this comedy proves Jonson to have at least as early as 1599 begun those literary assaults upon fellow-dramatists of which subsequent plays were to furnish more signal instances.

Cynthia's Revels (*acted* 1600).

In *Cynthia's Revels, or the Fountain of Self-Love* (as this extraordinary production is rather ominously called), the satire is of a literary rather than a personal kind, although of course it may contain many special allusions the force of which is lost to us[2]. The intention of this play (to which large additions were made in the folio) must have been as a literary manifesto to contrast the ends and aims of a true poet, writing for the entertainment of the highest authority on matters of taste as on all other matters, with the imbecile follies of those who purvey for the demands of a depraved and absurd fashion. I should be unwilling to suppose that Jonson intended Crites as a direct representation of himself; the self-laudation to be in that case laid to his charge would have to be condemned as absolutely intolerable; but that he wished the standpoint of Crites to indicate his own, and that in particular passages he has virtually identified himself with the character, seem to me alike irresistible conclusions[3]. Yet the allegory of the play as a whole is probably general rather than particular—except of course in the case of Cynthia herself, under whose name Queen Elisabeth is flattered with unmistakeable unction. Maybe we ought to attempt to find references to currents of feeling and opinion not concerned with matters of literary taste in such passages as that towards the conclusion of the play, where the poet appears to protest indignantly against the fickleness which ventured to speculate upon the supposed decline of the Virgin Queen[1].

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[1] The probable date of *Much Ado about Nothing* seems to lie in the years 1599-1600. Cf. *ante*, pp. 132-3.

[2] E. g. the passage in the Induction about 'promoters of other men's jests,' which Gifford considers to refer to Lyly, Marston, and perhaps Dekker. Mr. Fleay considers that the men characters of this play are repetitions, under fresh names, of those in *Every Man out of his Humour*.

[3] Dekker in his *Satiromastix* says: 'You must be called Asper, and Criticus, and Horace'; referring of course to *Every Man out of his Humour*, *Cynthia's Revels*, and *The Poetaster*. ('Criticus' was in the folio changed to 'Crites.') But the view advanced in the text will, I think, commend itself from a comparison of such passages as Arete's speech (act v. sc. 3), where the man praised 'without hyperbole' may well be identified with the author, and Mercury's (act ii. sc. 1), where Jonson could hardly have intended to describe himself as 'a creature of most perfect and divine temper,' &c.

While the intention of the play is obvious—viz. an appeal from the bad taste in fashion to the sovereign authority of good taste and to the judgment of an unprejudiced audience[2]—the dramatic execution of the design is, to say the least, perplexingly elaborate and intolerably lengthy[3].

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[1] See Cynthia's speech. act v. sc. 3, especially the lines

'For we are no less Cynthia than we were,
Nor is our power, but as ourself, the same';

and the allusions in the following:

'For so Actæon, by presuming far,
Did, to our grief, incur a fatal doom;
And so swoln Niobe, comparing more
Than he presumed, was trophæed into stone';

and cf. the allusions to Actæon and Niobe in act i. sc. 1. Now, I think there can be little difficulty in concluding Actæon to refer to Essex, who for his 'presumption' in abruptly quitting Ireland and presenting himself before the Queen was committed to custody at the close of 1599, and in June 1600 (the year of the production of the play), after being examined before the Council, was ordered to keep to his own house. Again, I venture to suggest that in Niobe we may trace an allusion to Arabella Stuart, whose pretensions to the throne certainly began to be 'compared' with Elisabeth's decline from about 1598. But (at least until better informed) I should hesitate before tracing here signs of the 'rivalry between the Essexian and Cecilian factions' in which Mr. R. Simpson (see a letter to *The Academy*, Jan. 31. 1874) appears to seek the final cause of the quarrel between Dekker and Jonson; though Cecil was in favour of the succession of James, who, as has been seen, so speedily took notice of Jonson.

[2] Gifford seems to regard the motto prefixed to the first (quarto) edition of *Cynthia's Revels* as obscure:

'Quod non dant proceres, dabit histrio:—
Haud tamen invideas vati, quem pulpita pascunt.'

But surely it is intelligible enough. The author has no Court patrons, and it is to the audience of a public theatre, from which he confessedly derives his means of support, that he appeals.

[3] Two-thirds of the enormous act v (including the entire foolery about the School of Courtship) and a long passage in act iv. sc. 1 (the wishes of the ladies Moria, Philautia, and Phantaste) were however added in the folio of 1616.

The plot, such as it is, lies buried beneath the characters, while the characters are buried beneath the dialogue, which in its turn largely consists of speeches of interminable length. It is equally difficult to understand how, as seems to have been the case, the audience should have borne with satisfaction so portentous a tax upon their attention, and how the Children of the Chapel, who performed the play, should have been able to get their parts by heart. The comedy begins briskly enough with an Induction of great vivacity and humour, contrived between the children-actors in their own characters[1]; and the first act, which prepares what plot there is to be found in the play, moves with comparative rapidity. The resurrection of Echo, indeed, although it cannot be supposed to have been introduced with the intention of satirising the frequent use of this mythological figure, has no real connexion with the action. Asotus and Amorphus, who are introduced in this act, remind us of Master Stephen and Bobadil; and are by far the best characters in the play[2]. The second act, however, instead of making any real progress in the plot, adds a large number of new characters which are described rather than worked into the texture of the play; and as it drags its slow length along, it becomes little more than a picture of manners, so elaborately exaggerated that, though full of humorous touches [1], it cannot be described as anything but a caricature. Thus in this curious play Jonson allowed the theory of comedy which he had conceived, and which he here repeats [2], to carry him into an extreme not less objectionable than its opposite, with which he found fault. In other words, *Cynthia's Revels* may be more truly designated a 'comical satire' on the vagaries of preposterous tastes than even a comedy of manners, while it cannot take rank as a comedy of character.

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[1] From a reading 'Sall' for 'child' in a passage in the quarto it appears that one of these children was the Salathiel Pavy, on whose death Jonson composed the exquisite epitaph (*Epigrams*, No. cxx), beginning:

'Weep with me, all you that read
This little story:
And know, for whom a tear you shed
Death's self is sorry.
'Twas a child that so did thrive
In grace and feature,
As Heaven and Nature seemed to strive
Which owned the creature.'

The concluding lines of this epitaph—

'But being so much too good for earth,
Heaven vows to keep him'—

furnish a signal example of 'Nature to advantage dress'd
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well express'd';

for the same idea has been a thousand times less happily expressed afterwards.

[2] Amorphus' self-praise is particularly good, especially his boast (resembling Don Giovanni's in the opera) that he has been 'fortunate in the amours of three hundred forty and five ladies, all nobly, if not princely descended; whose names I have in catalogue.'

Without entering into any further examination of this play, it may be observed that the device of the fountain of self-love is by no means carried out effectively; and that the intermixture of allegorical with direct satire which pervades the piece is far from uniformly happy [3]. The masque introduced into act v as a specimen of an entertainment befitting the revels of Cynthia hardly rises above the level of commonplace, and the good taste of the concluding mock litany to Mercury is, to say the least, questionable [4]. In short, the execution of the play as a whole fails to justify the unbounded self-confidence with which the Epilogue dismisses its audience—although the effect to which Jonson professed himself so utterly indifferent seems in the present instance to have been actually produced [5].

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[1] The scene (act iii. sc. 3) where Amorphus instructs Asotus in the art of beginning a courtship may be especially noted. And how excellent is the description of Philautia (act ii. sc. 1): 'She has a good superficial judgment in painting, and would seem to have so in poetry. A most complete lady in the opinion of some three beside herself!'

[2] In the fine *Prologue* he says that his Muse

'shuns the print of any beaten path;
And proves new ways to come to learned ears.'

The term 'humours' is more than once dwelt upon; cf. especially Crites' speech (act v. sc. 2).

[3] Cupid's description of *Argurion* (Money) is founded on the *Plutus* of Aristophanes. Cf. below as to the *Staple of News*.—Jonson, by the way, is indebted to Lucian for the humorous banter of Mercury as the god of thieves (act i. sc. 1), which Dryden imitated in his *Amphitryo*.

[4] It is ridiculed, but not for this reason, in *Satiromastix*.

[5] 'I'll only speak what I have heard him [the author] say:
By —— 'tis good; and if you like't, you may.'

Gifford compares the closing lines of Fletcher's *Nice Valour*. They are

The Poetaster (acted 1601).

Whatever may be the amount of personalities contained in the satire of *Cynthia's Revels*, no doubt can be entertained as to the purpose of Jonson's next play, superior to its predecessor as a drama in every respect. *The Poetaster, or His Arraignment* was acted by the Children of the Chapel Royal in 1601 [1], in a form considerably expanded before the publication of the comedy in the folio of 1616. As the main design of this play is unmistakeable, so its execution certainly exhibits no want of vigour or directness. If, as can hardly be denied, the satire here conveyed errs on the side of excess, it must be remembered—though not as a plea in defence of an artistic error—that Jonson's object in producing this play was to frighten off his adversaries from executing their scheme of avenging upon him the real or supposed wrongs they had suffered at his hands [2]. This object was not achieved; for Dekker in his *Satiromastix* (pr. 1602) 'untrussed' the 'humorous poet' with a fury redoubled by the smart of the new and insufferable wounds inflicted by *The Poetaster*. Still, an opportunity had at least been secured to the public and to posterity of drawing a comparison between the powers of the combatants; and this being so, the result of the process was virtually determined beforehand [3].

While therefore the purpose of *Cynthia's Revels* may be described as essentially (though by no means uniformly) defensive, *The Poetaster*, as the very title of the piece implies, exhibits the author in an attitude of attack. His design is to turn the tables on his adversaries, of

identical with the above in substance; but in expression Jonson's rollicking self-confidence remains without a parallel.

[1] They then included, as Dr. Herford reminds us, both Salathiel Pary, and the future dramatist Nathaniel Field.

[2] So much is distinctly proved by the passage in act iii. sc. 1, where the actor says: 'We have hired him [Demetrius] to abuse Horace [Jonson] and bring him in, in a play, with all his gallants.' Cf. act iv. sc. 4: 'Come, we'll go see how far forward our journeyman is towards the untrussing of him.' Thus the very sub-title of the projected play was already known. It may have been suggested by a passage in *Cynthia's Revels* (act v. sc. 2): '*Asopus.* Trust me with trussing all the points of this action, I pray.'

[3] For a brief account of *Satiromastix, or The Untrussing of the Humorous Poet*, see below, under Dekker.

whom he had fixed upon two as the principal victims of his satire—the one because he had been the agent chosen for forging the threatened bolt, the other for some reason or reasons not quite so obvious [1]. Dekker is the Demetrius of this play far more certainly than he is the Anaides of *Cynthia's Revels*—to leave out of sight the Carlo Buffone of *Every Man out of his Humour*. Marston, as may be held to have been not less satisfactorily proved, is the Crispinus of the play, the Poetaster proper. He must be concluded to have been far more odious to Jonson than was the case with Dekker, and there were features in his style which laid him more readily open to ridicule [2]. The entire action of the comedy is so arranged as to lead up to the 'arraignment' of these personages for having 'most ignorantly, foolishly, and, more like themselves, maliciously, gone about to deprave and calumniate the person and writings of Quintus Horatius Flaccus, poet and priest to the Muses; and to that end mutually conspired and plotted . . . taxing him falsely of self-love, arrogancy, impudence, railing, filching by translation,' &c. The scene in which the trial and judgment take place (act v. sc. 1) is therefore 'the scene' of the piece; and the trenchant vigour of its execution is undeniable. Horace (Jonson), after stating with an excess of modesty that he is 'the worst accuser under heaven,' conducts his own case, and pleads his cause with adequate self-consciousness. Virgil, who acts as judge, supports Horace without affecting any hesitation as to the recognition of his merits [1]. In the course of the proceedings is introduced the farcical device, borrowed from Lucian's *Lexiphanes*, of relieving Crispinus of the 'crudities' in his poetic diction by means of pills administered to him by Horace [2]; and finally the Poetaster and his helpmate are bound over by an 'oath of good behaviour' to keep the peace towards the object of their malignant spleen. In this most characteristic scene, Jonson no doubt had in mind the famous contest in *The Frogs* of Aristophanes; but it is needless to point out the difference between what can in no sense be respectively described as original and copy. The purpose of Aristophanes is elevated far above that of Jonson, even allowing credit to the latter, as he ought to be allowed it, for motives other than merely personal. In the satirical contrast of *The Frogs*, two great dramatic geniuses, types of the deepest significance—historical and moral as well as literary—are opposed to one another, and the decision demanded is full of the highest national, poetic, and human interest. At the same time, the element of personal motive is wholly absent, so that nothing intrudes to lower a comic action of unsurpassed power.

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[1] According to Jonson's statement to Drummond, the beginnings of his quarrels with Marston were that the latter 'represented him on the stage'; Mr. Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. ii. p. 71, thinks that this was under the character of Chrysoganus in *Histriomastix*, although in this instance Marston 'evidently meant to compliment Jonson, not to abuse him.' Marston's share in *Histriomastix* is, however, open to question, at least as to its amount.

[2] It is difficult to understand why, even before Gifford cleared up the matter (see in particular his notes to act iii. sc. 1, and act v. sc. 1), Crispinus should have been supposed to have been intended for Dekker. Jonson told Drummond that he wrote his *Poetaster* 'on Marston'; and it is the satirist as well as the dramatist who is derided in Crispinus. Mr. Fleay's further note of identification—the bloody toe in Crispinus' coat of arms—need hardly be pressed into the service.—The counter-theory that Crispinus was intended for Shakspere is maintained by Mr. Jacob Feis in his *Shakspere und Montaigne*, pp. 153 *seqq.*, where an elaborate but not very successful attempt is made to bring home to Shakspere each of the three names, Rufus, Laberius, Crispinus.—The question, whether the play as a whole should be held to form part of a literary controversy between Jonson and Shakspere, will be referred to immediately.

But before Jonson could arrive at his final scene, the exigencies of the stage required a plot; and it was in a happy moment that he invented the general action of his play. It must have been composed in comparative haste, for the enemy was upon him; and in fact he states that the writing of the play occupied only fifteen weeks [3]. The scene is laid in Rome, at the Court of Augustus. The disguise is transparent enough, and Jonson need hardly have afterwards taken credit for his considerateness in adopting it [1]. The action, however, is thus at all events removed into a less turbid atmosphere, while the author is enabled to display his learning, which he does without pedantry, and with much ingenuity of contrivance. But the introduction of a serious bye-plot concerning Ovid's amours with Julia is more or less gratuitous; and though the scene in which this part of the action culminates [2] is, in spite of its metaphysics, not devoid of pathos, it has no organic connexion with the real action of the piece. Several of the comic scenes in the earlier part of the play, on the other hand, are managed with extreme cleverness and vivacity, so in particular the entertainment of the poets by Chloe, an honest citizen's ambitious wife eager for the fashions of the Court [3], and the scenes where Tucca plays a prominent part. For albeit he has really nothing to do with the action, Captain Tucca is the most amusing character in the comedy—so amusing indeed that Dekker foisted him into his retort. He represents a special type of the military bully, distinct alike from Captain Bobadil and from Falstaff, of whom he has most absurdly been regarded as a copy [4]. His peculiarity is a buoyant blackguardism which recovers itself instantaneously from the most complete exposure, and a picturesqueness of speech constituting him a walking dictionary of slang.

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[1] See his speech, 'Before you go together, worthy Romans,' &c. (act v. sc. 1).

[2] The words vomited by Crispinus have been brought home to Marston, but only partially, by the research of Gifford, and more recently by that of Mr. Fleay (*u. s.*, p. 73). Mr. Feis, unless I do him an injustice, makes no attempt to support his counter-theory by a reference to this head of evidence.—In act iii. sc. 1 Marston is but one of several dramatists who supply instances of style to be honoured in the breach.

[3] See the passage in the speech of Envy, *ad in.* Dekker, who was a rough-and-ready playwright, considers fifteen weeks an unconscionably long period of incubation. See *Satiromastix*.

But though there is of course abundance of literary satire in the earlier acts (the ridicule against the old style of bombastic tragedy in act iii. sc. 1 has been already noted), and though Horace is worried by the importunities of Crispinus and decried by Demetrius with an insistance sufficient to leave no doubt as to the nature of the situation, the real business of the action, as already stated, only commences with the last act. Here the contrast between the true poets and the poetaster is made manifest; the intentions of Horace are vindicated; and the malice of his enemies is exposed. But, with genuine modesty, the poetic honours are given, not to Horace, but to Virgil (who is even allowed to recite a long passage from his 'Æneids'). It would be indeed pleasant could we suppose Jonson to have meant under the name of Virgil to honour a fellow-poet, by acknowledging whose pre-eminence he would have given a very different significance to this extraordinary play. It is, however, more likely that Chapman is intended under the character[1].

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[1] See the *Apologetical Dialogue*.

[2] Act iv. sc. 6. Julia appears at her chamber window, like Juliet.—Koeppel directs attention to Julia's speech in this scene, 'Ah me! that virtue, &c.,' as containing one of the choicest similes in the whole of Jonson's writings.

[3] Act ii. sc. 1. The little character of Hermogenes (borrowed of course from Horace) is particularly amusing. 'Can he sing excellently?' asks Julia of Chloe. 'I think so, madam; for he entreated me to entreat you to entreat him to sing.'

[4] By Davies (*u. s.*, p. 82), whose criticism of this play is deservedly reprobated by Gifford. Dekker in the preface ('to the World') of *Satiromastix* describes Captain Tucca as originally plagiarised from 'Captain Hannam.' and Gifford seems to regard this charge as proved. I cannot identify the Captain.

Jonson considerably enlarged this play before its publication in the folio of 1616, adding a version of one of the Satires of the real Horace[2]. The *Apologetic Dialogue* between Nasutus, Polyposus, and the Author, suffixed to the play, and also printed in the folio, was however written already in 1601, but not allowed to be printed. In this he sought to furnish a plain exposition of his motives in adopting the method of self-vindication which the play exemplifies; and after the fashion of an Aristophanic parabasis, addresses himself directly to the audience, before which he probably appeared *in propriâ personâ*. The 'Armed Prologue,' who appears at the close of the Induction, had served a similar purpose, and there can be little doubt of the correctness of Mr. Fleay's conjecture, that this device was alluded to by Shakspere in the 'Armed Prologue' to *Troilus and Cressida.* But the theory founded on the connexion thus with much probability established involves a series of further conjectures which cannot be here examined [1]. In the *Apologetic Dialogue* Jonson announced his intention—with the wisdom of which it would, under the circumstances, have been difficult to quarrel—of abandoning comedy for the present. When after a few years' interval he returned to it from his first excursion into the serener atmosphere of tragedy, he had in some measure at least recovered himself from the effects of a controversy which could not have been protracted after the same fashion without exercising a baneful influence upon his progress as a dramatic poet.

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[1] See Gifford's note to the passage in act v. sc. 1, before the entrance of Virgil. Mr. Fleay also thinks that Chapman, 'who was already at work on his *Homer*,' is the poet complimented. The same suggestion was made by the anonymous author of a book entitled *Shakespeare and Jonson: Dramatic Verses, Wit-Combats* (1864), cited *ap.* Bodenstedt, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. i (1865), p. 318. It is odd, by-the-bye, that Gifford should deny the appropriateness to the author of the *Georgics* of the praise involved in the lines,

'That which he hath writ
Is with such judgment laboured and *distilled*
Through all the common uses of our lives,' &c.

[2] Bk. II. Sat. 1, at the close of act iii. The first scene of the same act is a dramatisation of Bk. I. Sat. 9.

Volpone, or the Fox (acted 1605-6.

In *Volpone, or the Fox*, acted at the Globe late in 1605 or early in 1606, and reproduced at both Universities before it was printed in 1607 with an elaborate Dedication to these two 'most noble and most equal sisters,' Jonson made war upon a mightier although less tangible foe than any representative of a depraved literary taste. The Dedication aforesaid, indeed, refers to the poetasters of the time as degrading the art of poetry, and contrasts with them the true poet, who 'comes forth the interpreter and arbiter of nature, a teacher of things divine no less than human, a master in manners.' But the play itself is in aim a moral, not a literary, satire, although one at least of the literary predilections of the day is incidentally derided [2]. The

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[1] Viz. that *Troilus and Cressida*, supposed to have been acted at Cambridge before its production on the London stage, was the 'purge' said in *The Returne from Parnassus*, Part ii, act iv. sc. 3, to have been administered by Shakspere to Jonson, in return for the pill which 'Horace' had given to 'the poets.' There are difficulties in the way of accepting this theory,—less formidable, however, than those which oppose themselves to Mr. Feis' view that the 'purge' was Hamlet.

[2] See the famous sarcasm against the plagiarists of the *Pastor Fido* (act iii. sc. 2):

> 'All our English writers,
> I mean such as are happy in th' Italian,
> Will deign to steal out of this author, mainly,
> Almost as much as from Montagnié.'

Mr. Jacob Feis, in his elaborately perverse argument (*u. s.*, pp. 171–195), intended to show that *Volpone* was designed by Jonson as a counterblast comedy of *Volpone,* beyond all doubt one of its author's most powerful efforts, is at once a picture of the moral depravity of the age and an indignant satire upon it. Beyond doubt the picture is disgusting, as the satire is full of bitterness ; but what exposure could equal that which a few years later the conditions of society were to undergo in the terrible scandal of the Overbury case? In *Volpone* Jonson shows himself to have overcome the tendency noticeable in most of the comedies previously mentioned [1]. Although, as Gifford pointed out, the main plot of the piece was borrowed from an episode of the celebrated (so-called) *Satiricon* of Petronius Arbiter [2], it is probable that the general influence of Italian examples had helped to impress upon Jonson the importance of an effective plot even in a comedy more especially concerned with the delineation of character. The scene of the play, moreover, is laid in Italy—at Venice, a city whose name is associated through a succession of

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against *Hamlet* and Shakspere's supposed attack upon him as a friend of Florio, the translator of Montaigne, and an admirer of Montaigne himself, has sought to twist this passage into an attack upon Shakspere. I can perceive nothing that lends a colour to such a theory, unless it be that Jonson presented to Florio a copy of *Volpone*, which is preserved in the British Museum, with an autograph inscription saluting him as 'The ayde of his Muses.' In the context of the passage cited he speaks of the devices of the plagiarised author as 'fitting the time, and catching the court-ear,' an insinuation which, as Mr. Fleay points out, would fit Daniel, whose Arcadian Pastorals had been recently performed before royalty, but would have glanced off harmlessly from Shakspere. The entire theory of a controversy between Shakspere and Jonson turning on the merits, or the reverse, of Florio-Montaigne, I cannot but consider preposterous.

[1] Even in the *Poetaster*, described by the late Mr. Donne in a review of the earlier edition of this *History*, as illustrating the fact that Jonson is frequently 'the mar-plot of his own productions. Several of his dramas open with a fair promise of a probable, and even a happy, progress. The *Poetaster*, for instance, throughout the first act is excellent. But a blight soon falls on his fair morning, and henceforward it is in very few scenes that this comedy sustains the expectation excited at its opening.'

[2] Cf. Koeppel, *u. s.*, p. 8, where a further indebtedness of *Volpone* to the same source is indicated. Eumolpus and the *corvi* of Croton correspond to Volpone and the Venetian trefoil of hungry rascals. Jonson's additions are not only Sir Politick and Lady Wouldbe, but also Celia, in the song addressed to whom (act iii. sc. 5), imitated from Catullus and reprinted by Jonson in *The Forest*, Mr. Fleay thinks a personal reference recognisable. (The famous version from Philostratus, 'Drink to me only with thine eyes,' is also addressed to Celia.)—Passages in the anti-masque in act i have been traced to Lucian.

centuries with the notion of dark intrigue. Yet at the same time the types introduced are likewise those of vices unhappily common, under certain conditions, to humanity at large, while so far as they are types of manners, they may be said to belong to the age of their presentation rather than to the country with which they are identified.

The revolting aspects of life exhibited in this comedy are likely to prevent full justice being rendered its merits by most modern readers. Yet it long retained its hold over the national stage, while—which is less to be wondered at—the central character continued for generations to express to the popular mind the incarnation of a most loathsome variety of the vast *genus* hypocrite [1]. Everybody knows how, at a critical stage of events in the reign of Queen Anne, Dr. Sacheverell in his notorious sermon pointed an attack upon the Whig leaders as representatives of revolution principles, by alluding to the Lord Treasurer Godolphin under the nickname of the Old Fox or Volpone [2].

The story of this play is that of a villainous Venetian magnifico who, in order to attract the gifts of his friends and followers, feigns himself sick to death. Hereupon, he and his parasite persuade each of these hungry friends—the Vulture, the Crow, and the Raven, viz. Voltore (an advocate), Corbuccio, and Corvino—that he is to be Volpone's heir; and they fawn upon him accordingly with inconceivable baseness, but only to be one and all deceived. Ultimately, however, the Parasite or Fly (Moscha, a character drawn with inimitable vigour) turns round upon his master whom he has aided and abetted in this device; and the whole goodly party is brought to the justice which it richly merits. A farcical character is introduced into the play, or rather a pair of such characters—an English traveller who is a type belonging to other generations besides that of Ben Jonson, named Sir Politick Wouldbe, and his loquacious wife. These personages are of irresistibly comic force; but such is the hideous nature of much of the villainy in the play, that a robust digestion is required to go through the whole of it, in order to recognise the genuine power which it possesses. Coleridge, who like Schlegel acknowledges its high merits, remarks with truth that from its 'fertility and vigour of invention, character, language, and sentiment it is the strongest proof, how impossible it is to keep up any pleasurable interest in a tale, in which there is no goodness of heart in any of the prominent characters. After the third act, this play becomes not a dead, but a painful weight, on the feelings[1].'

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[1] Thus we read in the hearsay account of the fall of Clarendon given in Ludlow's *Memoirs* (ed. C. H. Firth, 1894), vol. ii. p. 407: 'The young man' [Charles the Second's son, the Duke of Richmond] 'unwarily took the bait, and, exclusively relying upon what the old Volpone' [Clarendon] 'had said, married Miss Stewart.'—More curious, as implying a knowledge of the play beyond its leading personage, is the following passage in Mrs. Hutchinson's *Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson* (ed. C. H. Firth, 1885), vol. ii. p. 17: 'Mr. Millington seemed very well to approve of them' [the Committee at Nottingham which was always at odds with the Governor], 'and protested again to the Governor the faithfulness of his heart to him, excusing his intimacy with his enemies upon a zeal he had to do him service, by discovering their designs against him, and called himself therin *Sir Politick Wouldbe*; but the Governor disliking his double-dealing,' &c.

[2] See Stanhope's *History of England under the Reign of Queen Anne* (1870), p. 405.

Epicoene, or The Silent Woman (*acted* 1650 .

Epicoene, or The Silent Woman, followed, again after a notable interval, at the beginning of the year 1610, when it was performed by the Children of the Revels, whose productions had for some time been subject to Daniel's arbitrament[2]. This comedy exemplifies the endeavour of its author, observable already in *Volpone*, to attain to closeness of construction; indeed both plays seek to accomplish this end within the limits of 'unity' of time as well as of action. This feature, together with the more signal merit of its extraordinary variety of excellent characterisation, obtained for the comedy the high compliment of being subjected by Dryden to a typically laudatory '*examen*' in his *Essay of Dramatic Poesy*[3]. When, however, in the course of this review Dryden observes that the intrigue of *Epicoene* is 'the greatest and most noble of any pure, unmixed comedy in any language,' just exception may be taken to extravagance of the praise. Coleridge is nearer the mark in calling this 'the most entertaining of Jonson's comedies'; and in truth, so far as the foundations of its plot are concerned, *Epicoene* would be properly described as an elaborate farce. For the plot of the piece turns upon a mere trick—no doubt one of the most audaciously successful ever played upon his audience by a comic dramatist, but still a trick pure and simple; and the fun drawn out of the supposition that an old misanthrope to whom all noise is odious marries what he believes to be a silent woman, but what proves a talkative body and is ultimately discovered to be a boy, is so wildly improbable as to be out of place in comedy[1]. But, although a farce, the play could only have been written by a dramatist of high comic genius. Indeed, of its kind *Epicoene* is without a rival, unless we turn to the writings of a comic dramatist worthy to rank as Jonson's peer—I speak of course of Molière[2]. The briskness of the fun in the dialogue—only here and there lapsing into Jonson's favourite weakness for lengthy analyses of character—is even less remarkable than the fecundity of invention displayed in a series of effective situations. Instead of flagging, the play grows more and more amusing from act to act; the fourth, with the catastrophe of the two timid fools—one of the most laughable comic situations ever invented—surpasses all that has preceded it; but the fifth is even better, with its inimitable consultation on the question of Divorce, and its final surprise.

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[1] *Literary Remains*, ii. 276.—A very appreciative criticism of *Volpone*, by Cumberland, is quoted by Gifford.

[2] Collier, vol. iii. p. 341. As to the date, cf. Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. i. p. 374.

[3] See Scott's *Dryden*, vol. xv.

The play is full of characters admirably adapted to the action. The hero or victim of the main plot is Morose the misanthrope, who (like Wallenstein) hates noise and bids his barber 'answer him not but with his leg,' and who is subjected to a succession of the most awful trials imaginable, from the moment that Truewit enters 'with a post-horn.' The character of Morose, it appears, Jonson borrowed, with the name, from a declamation of the Greek rhetorician Libanius [1], but the way in which the fancy is developed is of course original. Of native growth are the two gulls—the one 'a whiniling dastard' and the other a 'brave heroic coward.' The former is Sir John Daw, who is of a literary turn, criticises the classics with extreme volubility [2], and uses by way of oath the asseveration 'As I hope to finish Tacitus.' The latter is Sir Amorous La-Foole, not of the La-Fooles of Essex, but of the La-Fooles of London, though 'they all come of one house, the La-Fooles of the north, the La-Fooles of the west, the La-Fooles of the east and south—we are as ancient a family as any is in Europe—but I myself am descended lineally of the French La-Fooles—and we do bear for our coat yellow, or *or*, chequered *azure*, and *gules*, and some three or four colours more, which is a very noted coat, and has sometimes been solemnly worn by divers nobility of our house—but let that go by, antiquity is not respected now.' Then we have the Ladies Collegiates, devoted to the pursuit of a very undesirable course of education—a piece of satire aimed, it is said, at actually existing clubs of the day, combining absurd pretensions with profligate designs. Nor can Captain Otter be overlooked, with his bull, bear and horse, and his termagant wife[1]; and lastly there is Truewit, the wire-puller of the intrigue and expositor of the characters in general, but, as his name implies, himself a character of wit rather than of humour[2]. All the personages are played off on one another with admirable effect, the bye-plots being skilfully interwoven with the main plot, and the construction of the whole being as perspicuous as the *dénouement* is unexpected. In a word, Jonson's comic genius is nowhere more happy than in this most amusing play, although it is impossible to reckon it among the most important efforts of his comic genius[3].

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[1] Garrick's blunder in assigning the part of Epicoene to a woman is almost incredible. At the same time, the contrivance of the plot must be allowed to have been signally favoured by the regular practice of the stage in Jonson's time, when women's parts were performed by boys; so that the spectators must have been wholly unprepared for the *dénouement*.

[2] The thought of Molière constantly suggests itself to the reader of *Epicoene*. Not only is a certain similarity traceable in the situation (of course with every possible difference) to that of the *Médecin malgré lui*, while a hint of the *École des Femmes* (again with many differences) may be found in the 'Ladies Collegiates,' and a resemblance to the jargon of Molière's doctors in the 'most unmatrimonial Latin' of the sham parson and lawyer in act v, but the exuberance of the farce and the vigour of the character-drawing throughout the piece irresistibly recall Molière in his gayest vein.

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[1] See Gifford's note to act i. sc. 1; and cf. Koeppel, *u. s.* The character in Libanius, Dellamatio VI, is named Δύσκολος, but in the Latin interpretation accompanying the 1606 edition it is translated *Morosus*.

[2] Act ii. sc. 2: 'There's Aristotle, a mere commonplace fellow; Plato, a discourser; Thucydides and Livy, tedious and dry; Tacitus, an entire knot, sometimes worth the untying, very seldom. . . . Homer, an old tedious, prolix ass, talks of curriers, and chines of beef; Virgil, of dunging of land, and bees; Horace, of I know not what. . . . And so Pindarus, Lycophron, Anacreon,' &c. The whole passage is inimitable. Mr. Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. ii. pp. 374-5, gives specious reasons for his contention that 'Sir John Daw is Sir John Harington.'—The applied use of the word 'daw,' familiar to the readers of John Heywood's *Epigrams*, was a long-lived one on the English stage. Sir David Daw is the foolish lover, with more ancestors than wit, in Cumberland's *The Wheel of Fortune* (1795).

The Alchemist (*acted* 1610).

Fully equal in power of execution to *Epicoene*, while incomparably bolder in the purport of its satire, is Jonson's next comedy, justly esteemed one of his most notable works. *The Alchemist* was an attempt to clear off the face of the earth—at least off so much of it as was under the influence of the contemporary London stage—one of the greatest pests by which it was encumbered. And yet this particular pest, being at once contemptible and ridiculous, was precisely of a kind which it was within the legitimate province of comedy to assail[4]. It is very possible that the loyal enthusiasm of Jonson's editor may over-estimate the effect produced by the assault; the subject is, in any case, one which it must be left to special research fully to elucidate; but the result must have been great, and—which suffices for our purpose—what could be done by comedy in this direction was here done. An indelible brand was set upon one of the most deleterious and shameless growths of the baneful *genus* impostors that has ever availed itself of the endless chances offered by human credulity[1]. When an author has done so much as this, he has rendered a conspicuous service to the interests of society; and it becomes unnecessary to adjust too nicely the relations between the *post hoc* and the *propter hoc* in estimating his services to a good cause.

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[1] Cf. Pepys' *Diary*, under date July 30, 1667, for Charles II and Tom Killigrew's irreverent applications of this character.

[2] See Dryden's *Preface* to *The Mock Astrologer* (*Works*, ed. Scott, vol. iii): 'It appears that this one character of wit was more difficult to the author than all his images of humour in the play; for those he could describe and manage from his observations of men; this he has taken, or at least part of it, from books: witness the speeches in act i, translated *verbatim* out of Ovid, *De arte amandi*; to omit what afterwards he borrowed from the VIth Satire of Juvenal against women.'

[3] The Prologues to *Epicoene* seem to show that in writing this play, Jonson was well aware of the necessity to please—a necessity which he at times failed or scorned to recognise. His other and more characteristic anxiety was to defend himself against a false criticism which would at once condemn a piece so 'popular' in its action.

[4] Dr. Herford, *Studies, &c.*, p. 232, points out that Jonson abstained from following up his *Alchemist* with any exposure of 'the more deadly social scourge' of witchcraft—a theme occupying a field debateable, in a way almost unparalleled between tragedy and comedy.

The action of this play, while strictly observing the unities of both time and place, is carried on with unabating vigour from the opening, which is not the less excellent because, together with the general course of the plot, it is derived from the *Mostellaria* of Plautus[2]. On the other hand, a certain degree of carelessness is observable in the close, a part of the drama to which Jonson, like many dramatists inferior to him, paid less attention than is the wont of the theatrical public, always childishly eager to see how a thing ends. In this instance he was guilty of a palpable error of omission in allowing one of the conspirators (Face) to escape with impunity.

The characters are drawn with the utmost vigour, in particular of course those of the three confederates, Subtle, Face, and Dol, in whom Jonson appears to have had in view three real personages, protegees (till their real nature was discovered) of that impartial patron of useful, useless, and pernicious arts, the impotent star-gazer Rudolph II[3]. As a foil to these adventurers are introduced the greedy gulls, Sir Epicure Mammon and his companion crew, among whom, however, Tribulation Wholesome and his brother 'of the separation' deserve special mention. The bitterness of the satire against the Puritans in such a scene as act iii. sc. 1 is intense; but Jonson rubbed every element of irritation into the sore by means of the indefatigable industry with which he had, *more suo*, accumulated an encyclopædic knowledge of his theme. The entire play furnishes a signal illustration of his habitual conscientiousness as to details, from his comprehensive learning on the main subject of his satire down to his familiarity, acquired no doubt in the course of ordinary personal experience, with the stock-in-trade of an honest tobacconist[1].

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[1] See Gifford's concluding note to the play. I must refrain from pursuing the subject into its historical details, which are endless. The alchemists had the inestimable advantage of enjoying the patronage of Queen Elisabeth in the earlier part of her reign. (See *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, Elisabeth, Addenda*, 1566–79, pp. 10, 47.) On the stage Lyly exposed the alchemists in his *Gallathea* (1592), and Jonson seems to have returned to the subject in his *Mercury Vindicated from the Alchemists at Court*, a masque of uncertain date, but apparently later than the comedy.—It may be noted that the description of the destruction of the elixir (act iv. sc. 3) has been thought to have been suggested by the *Chanones Yemannes Tale* in Chaucer. (See an article, *Mediaeval Projectors*, in *The Saturday Review*, Aug. 15, 1874.)

[2] Barry Cornwall, *u. s.*, pp. xix–xx, remarks on the essential likeness between the plans of *The Alchemist* and *Volpone*.

[3] One of these, Kelly, is also mentioned in Fletcher's *Fair Maid of the Inn*, act iv. sc. 2.

Bartholomew Fair (*first acted October* 31, 1614).

This command of characteristic detail is displayed in a still more extraordinary degree in the comedy with which, after an interval of a few years, the author of *The Alchemist* again came before a popular audience. He had in the meantime unsuccessfully produced his second tragedy, *Catiline*; and, as was his wont, a spirit of defiance had been aroused in him by failure, where he had reckoned on a conspicuous success. But to this feeling he contrived to give so novel and humorous an expression in the *Induction* to *Bartholomew Fair*, that the manner of the appeal must have conciliated the goodwill, while it excited the curiosity, of the spectators. When this comedy was, on the day after its first public performance, repeated at Court, the author, in the *Epilogue* written for the purpose, expressed himself with more hesitation; but we do not know whether in this instance the play 'pleased the King.' On the public stage it became enormously popular, doubtless on account both of the incomparably vivid realism with which it treated a subject chosen with equal boldness and felicity, and of the irresistibly broad humour of its attack upon the Puritans, as the natural enemies of all frequenters of playhouses. Under Charles I it was, for the same reason, but rarely seen on the stage; it was, however, very successfully revived under Charles II, with whom it seems to have been a favourite[1]. An *Apologie* for *Bartholomew Fair* was prefixed by Jonson to his translation of the *Ars Poetica*, but perished in the burning of his library.

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[1] See the description of Abel Drugger's shop, act i. sc. 1. Abel Drugger is a small character in the comedy, but attained to immortality through Garrick's representation of it. For an admirable description of Garrick's self-metamorphosis into the 'unlicked nature' of Abel Drugger, see *The Early Diary of Frances Burney*, edited by A. R. Ellis, 1889, vol. i. p. 255.—A droll entitled *The Empiric* had been founded on *The Alchemist* in 1676; Francis Gentleman's comedy, *The Tobacconist*, was printed in 1771, and republished as a farce under the same title by W. Oxberry in 1821.—A curious incident in the stage-history of Jonson's comedy is its performance, with an Epilogue introducing the name of the celebrated financier John Law, on the occasion of his witnessing the play at Drury Lane in 1721, after the collapse of his schemes in France. See *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1825, vol. i. p. 101, cited in *The Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. xxxii (1892), p. 233.

Bartholomew Fair is a comedy too well known to need description. Absolutely original, so far as is known, in both conception and construction, it abounds with the most direct kind of satire and with the broadest fun. This comedy is said to contain a greater number of characters than have before or after been brought together into the texture of any other single piece; and all these characters are from real life—part and parcel of the London of the day. But there is plot enough to keep the whole *farrago* well together; while, notwithstanding Pepys, the uproariously mirthful Puppet-show in the last act supplies a climax to the interest. The amount of odd 'learning'—for so it merits to be called—crowded into the play is simply amazing; the dialogue is a perfect dictionary of technical speech of all sorts, from the slang of the horse-courser and of the gingerbread-woman to the cant of the 'Banbury-man,' Zeal-of-the-Land Busy. The broadest farce-effects are freely introduced; nor is any device for bringing down the house eschewed, except—if the author is to be believed on his word—personal satire[2]. Mr. Fleay, however, adheres to the opinion, not only that Lanthorn Leatherhead was intended for Inigo Jones[1], but that Littlewit, who makes the puppet-play for the motion-man, was meant for Samuel Daniel, and the puppet-play itself designed as a burlesque upon an episode of his *Queen's Arcadia*[2].

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[1] Cf. Nichols, *Progresses of James I*, vol. iii. p. 28. Pepys saw the play performed in the presence of Charles II on September 7, 1661. 'And here,' he writes, 'was "Bartholomew Fayre," with the puppet-show, acted to-day, which had not been these forty years (it being so satyricall against Puritanism, they durst not till now, which is strange they should already dare to do it, and the King do countenance it), but I do never a whit like it the better for the puppets, but rather the worse.'

[2] See the *Induction*: 'In consideration of which, it is finally agreed, by the aforesaid hearers and spectators, That they neither in themselves conceal, or suffer by them to be concealed, any state-decypherer, or politic pick-

Of its kind, *Bartholomew Fair* may safely be asserted to be without a rival in our dramatic literature[3]. Unapproached in variety of humour, as a descriptive comedy it is invaluable to the historian as a picture of contemporary life, and to the literary reader remains in general effect hardly less fresh in the vigour of its realism than on the day when it was first produced. To the popular stage it can, from the very conditions of its composition, never be restored. Its ethical purpose was a sound although not a lofty one. Yet there is no improbability in the supposition that this picture of a scene of gross enjoyment and brutal greed, which long continued familiar to our English capital[4], suggested to the imagination of another great national writer of a wholly different type his undying picture of the Vanity Fair which all pilgrims to a further goal must 'needs go through[5].'

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lock of the scene. so solemnly ridiculous as to search out who was meant by the gingerbread woman, who by the hobby-horse man, who by the costardmonger, nay, who by their wives. Or that will pretend to affirm on his own inspired ignorance, what Mirror of Magistrates is meant by the justice, what great lady by the pig-woman, what concealed statesman by the seller of mouse-traps, and so of the rest.'

[1] See *English Drama*, vol. i. p. 378. Possibly Inigo Jones may have been in Jonson's mind when he elaborated certain features in Leatherhead; but, if so, it is difficult to understand why, in his *Expostulation with Inigo Jones,* he should have compared his adversary with Adam Overdo, a different character in the same play.

[2] See Fleay, *u. s.*

[3] I can call to mind no parallel in the dramatic literature of any other nation. Goethe's delightful *Jahrmarkt von Plundersweilen*, in form exceedingly felicitous, is far too slight in substance to come into comparison with Jonson's comedy.

[4] See for a picturesque incidental reference to Bartholomew Fair Macaulay's *History of England*, ch. xx, where an account is given of a curious attempt to utilise its opportunities for political purposes as late as the year 1693.

[5] It seems to me quite probable that Bunyan had read (he could hardly have seen) *Bartholomew Fair.* Cf. Gifford's note to act iii. sc. 1. As to Bunyan's literary equipment, see some suggestive remarks in Froude's *Bunyan* (*English Men of Letters Series*).

The Devil is an Ass (*acted* 1616).

The oddly-named comedy of *The Devil is an Ass*, acted in 1616, seems already to exhibit a certain degree of decay in the dramatic powers which had been so signally called forth in its predecessor. Yet this comedy possesses a considerable literary interest, as adapting both to Jonson's dramatic method, and to the general moral atmosphere of his age, a theme connecting itself with some of the most notable creations of the earlier Elisabethan drama. Dekker's *If this be not a good Play, the Divell is in it* (1612), itself a mere aftergrowth of the series in question, no doubt suggested to Jonson both the name of his comedy and the general treatment of its subject, from which the supernatural element may be said to be practically eliminated. Both dramatists were no doubt contented with the *Pleasant Historie of Friar Rush,* without going back to Macchiavelli's *novella* on the *Marriage of Belphegor* [1]. Jonson would have completely turned the corner by his invention of a 'stupid devil [2],' who practically has to take his chance with all the other personages of the plot, had his conception been carried out with sufficient dramatic force. 'Pug, the less devil,' being desirous of doing 'some service to the commonwealth,' of which he is a juvenile but aspiring member, is permitted by 'Satan, the great devil,' his provident sire, to start in life on this more or less promising quest, and engages himself accordingly as servant to a Norfolk squire of the name of Fabian Fitzdottrel. The result of all his efforts, to which his intellectual powers are by no means adequate, is, however, that he finds himself completely outwitted, and is in the end carried off by 'Iniquity,' so as to escape the gallows. The idea of the play is therefore as healthy as its plot is ingenious; but apart from the circumstance that the latter is rather slow in preparation, and by no means, I think, gains in perspicuousness as it proceeds, the design itself suffers from one radical mistake. Pug's intelligence is so much below par, that he suffers as largely on account of his clumsiness as on account of his viciousness, while remaining absolutely without influence upon the course of the action[1].

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[1] Cf. Herford, *Studies, &c.*, pp. 293 *seqq.* The first extant edition of the English *Friar Rush* bears date 1620, but the book was well known as early as 1584.

[2] Schlegel, seizing with great felicity upon an untranslateable German idiom, called the play *Der dumme Teufel*—a title which must be allowed to be twice as good as that of the English original. The phrase 'the Devil is an ass' appears to have been proverbial. See Fletcher's *The Chances,* act v. sc. 2:

'Dost thou think
The devil such an ass as people make him?'

The comedy is at the same time full of humour, particularly in the entire character of Fitzdottrel, who, after taking Pug into his service on the credit of his *name* of Devil, refuses to believe his assurance that he is such in *fact*[2]. Fitzdottrel belongs to a class of characters which, as Gifford points out, Jonson loved to pourtray—*viz.* that of the simpleton or 'gull.' His ambition to become 'Duke of Drownlands,' on the strength of taking part in a project for draining the waste lands of the kingdom, is a satire by no means far-fetched, as applying either to Jonson's age or any other prolific of 'projects' and 'projectors.' The particular 'projector' of this play, Meercraft, with his schemes for making twelve thousand pounds by a new method of dressing dogskins, twenty thousand by a new system of bottling ale, and an untold sum by 'making wine of raisins,' and another by 'serving the whole state with toothpicks[3],' is excellent; yet he is made less of than is the Alchemist in the play of that name, and serves chiefly as an instrument for working the folly of Fitzdottrel. The scene between the goldsmith Gilthead and his son, to make whom a gentleman the father carries on the doubtful practices of his trade[4], also contains some vigorous satire. The pretended exorcism of pretended evil spirits, a delusion rife in this age, is ridiculed in very vigorous fashion[5].

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[1] 'He is,' Dr. Herford happily says, in his account of the play, *u.s.*, pp. 318 *seqq.*, 'the fly upon the engine-wheel, fortunate to escape with a bruising; instead of spoiling human plans, he hangs helplessly in the background, or awkwardly intervenes to no one's disadvantage but his own.'

[2] Act v. sc. 4.

[3] Act ii. sc. 1; act iv. sc. 1.

[4] Act iii. sc. 1. The definition of debt by Everill is worth quoting as having met with much practical acceptance:

> 'They owe you that mean to pay you: I'll be sworn
> I never meant it.'

[5] Act v. sc. 5.

Among the other characters, it is pleasing to note that Ben Jonson has done honour to female virtue in the character of Mrs. Fitzdottrel, notwithstanding the giddiness, and to gentlemanly feeling in that of Wittipol[1], notwithstanding the sensuousness, which at first these personages respectively betray.

It has already been incidentally mentioned[2], that Jonson has introduced in *The Devil is an Ass* some reminiscences of the mysteries and moralities in the speeches of Satan and of the Vice, Iniquity.

The Staple of News (*acted* 1625).

A long interval precedes the date of Jonson's next comedy; and in *The Staple of News* we accordingly recognise a play, produced perhaps at the call of want, certainly bearing the marks of old age. The author was quite aware of this; he avows beforehand that his powers will be held to show themselves decaying[3]; but this consciousness only rouses him to display, as it were defiantly, his most prominent characteristics; and one arrives at the conclusion that this comedy exhibits its author as sinking into a species of mannerism of mind.

Its design is allegorical, and was of course suggested by the *Plutus* of Aristophanes, whence certain passages are borrowed[4]. But though a large admixture of direct satire (by far the best part of the play) is added, it cannot be said that as a whole the comedy was well suited for the popular stage. The bye-plot of the Staple-of-News Office is, however, excellent; it is neither the first nor the last time that admirable fun has been made of the humours of a newspaper office[5]; but the Press was in its infancy in Jonson's days, and the defects in its management were still such as to make the very idea of its operations laughable. The pensive public resented this attack upon the purveyors of its favourite intellectual nourishment, and had to be softened by an *envoi*. The idea of the 'Canters' College' is admirably worked out, though perhaps too elaborately for a drama; the notion might have served as the framework for a satire on some such plan as that of *The Ship of Fooles*. Jonson's uneasiness as to the public betrays itself in the caveats which he thinks it necessary to append to this passage[1] (the scene by-the-bye is laid in the familiar locality of the Apollo room in the Devil Tavern); but nowhere has the moral indignation of the poet found more genuine and direct expression than in the speeches towards the close of this scene. The intermezzos of the gossips Mirth, Tattle, &c., on the other hand, are not particularly lively; but Jonson could never resist the desire to control the judgment of his audience.

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[1] The part of Wittipol was played by the actor 'Dickey' Robinson, to whose celebrity as a player of women's parts reference is made in act ii. sc. 1. See as to him Collier, vol. iii. pp. 475-80.

[2] *Ante*, vol. i. p. 109. See in the same connexion *ib.*, *note*, as to a passage in *The Staple of News*.

[3] See the close of act iv. The Prologue is far more self-contained, though equally self-conscious.

[4] Cf. act ii. sc. 1; act iv. sc. 1. The broadly-humorous passage about the dogs (act v. sc. 2) was suggested by *The Wasps*.

[5] The thought of the Staple-of-News Office first occurs in Jonson's masque of *News from the New World discovered in the Moon*, presented at Court in 1625. Fletcher, who undoubtedly had Jonson's play before him, makes fun of the same idea in *The Fair Maid of the Inn* (act iv. sc. 2). Cf. also Shirley's

The New Inn, or, The Light Heart (*acted Jan.* 19 1629).

If in *The Staple of News* the old fire still burns, it seems all but quenched in the most unfortunate of all Ben Jonson's plays—*The New Inn, or The Light Heart*. This comedy was produced on Jan. 19, 1629, but was received so unfavourably as not to be even heard to the end. It was published by the author two years afterwards, with an angry title-page declaring it to be here offered 'as it was never Acted, but most negligently Played by some, the *King's Servants*; and more squeamishly beheld and

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Love Tricks (act i. sc. 1).—As to the leaflets containing 'Wonderful Strange Newes from Germany,' parodied in the reports from 'Libtzig' and elsewhere, supplied to the Staple-of-News Office, see Herford, *u.s.*, p. 173.—The modern comic stage has of course a more serious task in castigating the vices, or ridiculing the foibles, of journalism; for in Jonson's age the journalist was merely a newsmonger. Perhaps the best German comedy produced by a living author is G. Freytag's *Journalisten*, while it is hardly necessary to recall the furore created by V. Sardou's admirable *Rabagas*. R. Nicolai, *Geschichte der neugriechischen Literatur*, 1876, p. 178, mentions among J. R. Nerulos' comedies in Modern Greek, Ὁ Ἐφημεριδοφόβος (Athens, 1837), as satirising the factiousness of Greek party-life, and the contentiousness of the editors and readers of public journals in particular. Our own stage has made no attempt in recent times to illustrate, except in passing, a subject which one would have thought peculiarly inviting.

[1] Act iv. sc. 1.

censured by others, the *King's Subjects*, 1629. Now at last set at Liberty to the Readers, his *Majesty's* Servants and Subjects, 1631'; and with an address to the reader conceived in a similar spirit[1].

Apart from the question of the consideration due to an eminent artist on account of past services—and unfortunately the public has usually found it a difficult task to combine keenness of criticism with generosity of temper[2]—it cannot be said that *The New Inn* was unjustly damned. Jonson's remark[3] that 'the only decay, or hurt of the best men's reputation with the people is, their wits have outlived the people's palates,' whatever its general truth, will not apply to the case of this unfortunate comedy. Its plot is absurd—in parts even grossly so[4]; while the comic passages proper—the vulgarities of Tipto and Fly and his associates, as well as the quite useless intermezzo of the tailor's wife—are heavy and tedious. Yet some of the characters are pleasing; nobility of breeding is well preserved in the Host (a nobleman in disguise); there is some vivacity in Prue (to whom, as originally named Cis, the public for some mysterious reason took objection[5]), and a touch of a Portia-like conflict between high spirit and feeling in Lady Frampul. The notion of the trial of Lovel's passion by a declamatory test would have better suited a masque than a comedy; but no Miltonic afflatus buoys up the noble morality of the 'appellant's' speeches. The oration in honour of true valour is however finer than that in praise of 'Platonic' love, which must be described as cold and colourless [1].

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[1] The Prologue had been comparatively moderate in tone, but by no means of a sort to conciliate good-will. The Epilogue, on the other hand, is very touching; another was written 'in the Poet's defence, but the play lived not in opinion to have it spoken.' To the *Ode (to Himself)* composed after this misfortune I have already referred. It was (not unwittily) answered by Feltham; and called forth a flattering echo from Randolph, another of vigorous praise from Cleveland, and a third, in which praise is judiciously mixed with gentle reproof, from Carew.

[2] Twenty years since it was a common saying that as a rule the London public was far more generous than that of Paris towards old favourites; but, whether or not the comparison holds good at the present day, there is obviously another side to the whole question.

[3] In the *Discoveries*.

[4] So particularly the disguise of the mother as a degraded Irishwoman.

[5] See the second Epilogue.—Mr. Fleay (*English Drama*, vol. ii. p. 385), who compares the reference to 'Secretary Sis' in *Charis*, viii, whom he thinks identical with the Frances Lady Frampul of the play, feels sure that there was a personal intention in the character of the chambermaid.

The Magnetic Lady (*acted* 1633).

After *The New Inn* Jonson produced two further comedies, of which the earlier, *The Magnetic Lady, or Humours Reconciled*, acted, as it would appear under the latter title, in 1633, seems to have not been wholly unsuccessful [2]. Yet in it we have in truth nothing more than the remnants of Ben Jonson—dry leaves from a nosegay of brighter days. The conception of the piece is that of assembling a variety of characters, each distinguished by its own 'humour,' round the centre supplied by the dramatic action; but there is nothing *magnetic* about the lady except the money of her niece, and the humours of the characters in general are described rather than illustrated by the course of the play. In its execution the marks of old age are apparent. Gifford praises the character of Polish, the she-parasite of Lady Loadstone, as an unequalled dramatic picture of the 'gossipping toad-eater'; at all events, this personage is more vigorously drawn than the rest of the *Intimes* [3] of the Magnetic Lady. The author's undertaking to 'reconcile' the humours contrasted with one another is indeed carried out in part, but very perfunctorily.

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[1] It may be interesting to compare a passage in this play (act i. sc. 1), where the Host says,

> 'If I be honest, and that all the cheat
> Be of myself, in keeping this Light Heart,
> When I consider all the world 's a play;
> The state of men's affairs, all passages
> Of life, to spring new scenes, come in, go out,
> And shift, and vanish; and if I have got
> A seat to sit at ease here in mine inn
> To see the comedy,' &c.,

with a far more original application of the familiar simile in the *Discoveries* (*De vitâ humanâ*; Cunningham, iii. 404). Cf. *ante*, p. 131.

[2] The actors were involved in some trouble on account of certain interpolations (mostly oaths) made by them in the text. Hence the charge of 'profaneness' in Gill's lines. See Collier, vol. i. pp. 480–1; Dyce, Introduction to Shirley's *Works*, p. xix, and Fleay, *u. s.*, p. 385.

[3] V. Sardou's successful comedy of this name will be remembered among the most admirably constructed pieces of this singularly skilful dramatist.

Altogether the comedy is by no means devoid of ingenuity[1]; but on the other hand it cannot be pronounced free from coarseness[2].

Although this play, as should be remembered in criticising it, was the work of a bed-ridden author, his self-confidence was still far from extinct, as the Induction and intermezzos sufficiently show. When the play was scurrilously attacked in some satirical lines by Alexander Gill, Jonson defended himself (not very brilliantly) in an *Epilogue to the King*. *The Magnetic Lady* was not printed till 1641.

A Tale of a Tub (*acted* 1633).

The last dramatic work by Jonson brought on the stage was unsuccessful, and in spite of an element of novelty in it, or perhaps on account of the inadequacy of the author's power to perform the task which he thus imposed upon himself, is quite the least interesting of his plays. Writing in his old age, and on a sick bed, Jonson could hardly have succeeded in giving to the comedy of rustic manners—entitled *A Tale of a Tub* (acted 1633)—the freshness of tone which can alone lend attractiveness to a realistic picture of rural life. In his better days he might, by an effort in the same direction, have come into closer competition with *The Merry Wives*. Yet *A Tale of a Tub* displays its author's usual care and completeness in points of detail; he must have given some special study to the dialect, which, though the scene lies about London, seems partially Western; and a superabundance of homely proverbs is introduced, showing a curious familiarity with this kind of folk-lore. The earlier part of the piece contains some references to the usages of St. Valentine's Day, but little or no poetry is infused into this or other passages offering opportunities for its introduction. The heroine Awdrey, beset by almost as many suitors as was Penelope, is a sketch perhaps true to nature, but coarse and unpleasing; the comic characters—even Hannibal Puppy—fail to amuse. Nor is the effect of the play perceptibly improved by its being made the vehicle of personal satire. Inigo Jones, with whom Jonson had been for some time in feud, is held up to ridicule under the character of In-and-in Medley the cooper, who calls himself *architectonicus professor*[1], and who devises the so-called masque which closes the play in the printed copy, though it was, with the whole part of Vitruvius Hoops, struck out when the comedy was acted at Court. The puppet-show, which merely reproduces in a series of 'motions' the substance of the action of the play itself, is, so far as one can see, devoid of wit.

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[1] The sophistical defence of wealth (act ii. sc. 1) is clever, but too elaborate for a stage-play.

[2] See, however, as to the oaths, *note* 2 on the previous page.

The title of this comedy finds its immediate explanation in the name of Squire Tub, one of the personages of the play[2]; but in a passage contained in it the origin of the phrase is connected with the tub of Diogenes[3]. It was, however, proverbial long before the time of Ben Jonson; although the remembrance of the title of his comedy may have helped to suggest to the greatest of English satirists the title of his famous apologue[4].

The Sad Shepherd (fragment; by 1637).

Whether or not Jonson left *The Sad Shepherd* behind him in the unfinished state in which it has come down to us must remain undecided; nor is it possible to fix the date of the composition of this charming fragment, except in so far as in the first line of the Prologue the author speaks of himself as

> 'He that hath feasted you these forty years';

which would take us back to about 1595–7. But it is of course perfectly possible that the play was written at a much earlier date than the Prologue, which in point of fact merely indicates the expected time of the production of the piece. Mr. Fleay has observed that a further passage in the Prologue, cited below, as to the introduction of 'mirth' into pastorals cannot fit a date later than 1619, when Jonson, in his *Conversations with Drummond*, touched on this very point *à propos* of his pastoral drama *The May Lord*[1]. The probability is certainly in favour of this hypothesis—for the fragment exhibits no traces of age or infirmity in its author—but it cannot be said to amount to a certainty, and, strictly speaking, affects the question of the date of the Prologue only. Nor should we obtain any further clue to the date of composition of *The Sad Shepherd*, should it, in accordance with a conjecture to be discussed below, be held to be identical with Jonson's other pastoral drama, *The May Lord*, generally supposed to be lost.

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[1] Act iv. sc. 2. The quarrel is supposed to have arisen out of the ill-success of *Chloridia,* in which Jonson and Jones were jointly interested, at Shrovetide, 1632. Collier, vol. i. p. 480.

[2] Act i. sc. 3.

[3] Act iv. sc. 2.—One would have expected to find it in the *Diogenes* scenes of Lyly's *Campaspe*; but it does not occur there.

[4] It is to be found in *The Proverbs of John Heywood* (1546), part ii. ch. ix (Julian Sharman's edition, 1874, p. 160: '*A tale of a tubbe:* your tale no truth avouth'); in *The Marriage of Wit and Science* (printed probably 1570), and in *Misogonus* (printed 1577, but written about 1560; see Collier, vol. ii. p. 378).—According to Forster, *Life of Swift*, vol. i. p. 149, the origin of the phrase is the practice of seamen to fling a tub overboard to turn a whale from mischief; and Swift used the title as indicating his object of throwing out his *Tale* to 'divert dangerous assailants from objects that invited attack in Church and State.' Forster recalls the anecdote of Sir Thomas More exclaiming at an incoherent speech in his court by an attorney named Tubbe: 'Why, this is a Tale of a Tub!'

The references contained in the Prologue to *The Sad Shepherd* to recent discussions concerning the theory and practice of the species of drama of which *The Sad Shepherd* is an example, offer a fitting opportunity for a few remarks on the general subject of the origin of the English pastoral drama. Jonson's work, or works, it should however be remembered, had been preceded in our literature by more than one noteworthy effort in the same direction.

The modern pastoral drama.

In a previous passage of this book[2] the origin of the Italian pastoral drama was briefly noticed; and the influence of this unique literary species has become apparent as the works of several of the Elisabethan dramatists—more particularly those of Lyly—have been passed under review. Properly speaking, the modern pastoral drama (of which the piscatorial, where the personages are fishermen instead of shepherds, is of course merely a subsidiary form[3]), like modern pastoral poetry in general, followed one of two courses, without however always consistently adhering to the one as distinct from the other. The one was the *naïf* or natural species, of which the Sicilian idyll is the prototype; the other the artificial or allegorical, whose favourite scene is Arcadia, with the mystic worship of Pan as its central fancy. But into both species a parodistic element inevitably introduced itself from the very first; and the pastoral drama of the Italian Renascence, like the pastoral poetry of the Roman Renascence and that of our own literature, in both its Elisabethan and its 'Augustan' ages, was always either conscious of its artificiality, or intentionally used its traditional machinery for secondary purposes of a didactic or satirical sort.

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[1] See *Conversations*, xvi: 'He hath a pastorall intitled *The May Lord*. . . . Contrary to all other pastoralls, he bringeth the clowns making mirth and foolish sport.'

[2] Vol. i. p. 231.

[3] It sprang from the *Egloga Pescatoria*, invented by the Neapolitan Sannazaro (1485-1550), of which the prototype was *Idyll.* xxi. of Theocritus

The Italian pastoral drama.

The father of the Italian pastoral drama was the famous Politian (Agnolo Poliziano, 1454–1494), whose *Orfeo* begins like an idyll and ends like a tragedy. Designed of course to be performed with music—for the pastoral drama is the parent of the opera—it developes its story simply, and without any symbolical intention[1]. Niccolo dà Correggio's (1450–1508) *Cefalo, or Aurora*, and other compositions of the same type followed, before in 1554 Agostino Beccari produced, as totally new of its kind, his Arcadian pastoral drama of *Il Sagrifizio*. In this the comic element prevails, as it does in Agostino Argenti's *Lo Sfortunato* (1567), a comedy of amorous intrigue in pastoral dress.

(῾Αλιεῖς). Cf. Klein, v. 9. Jonson, as will be seen, intended a dramatic effort in this particular direction; another was actually carried out by Phineas Fletcher in his *Sicelides* (printed 1631; see Dr. Grosart's edition of Phineas Fletcher's Writings in the *Fuller's Worthies Library*). This seems to have been the production exhibited before James I, at King's College, Cambridge, in 1615. Goethe's charming *Fischerin* (1782) is a well-known later example of this kind of pastoral drama.

[1] Klein, in whose fifth volume will be found a full account of the literary growth here only described in its merest outline, recalls Theseus' criticism in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* (act v. sc. 1) of the obsolete style of pastoral drama, curiously enough applied to a play on this very subject of Orpheus. Lysander offers as an entertainment

> 'The riot of the tipsy Bacchanals,
> Tearing the Thracian singer in their rage';

but Theseus rejects it as stale:

> 'That is an old device, and it was play'd
> When I from Thebes came last a conqueror.'

Tasso's Aminta.

But an epoch in the history of the pastoral drama is marked by the *Aminta* of Torquato Tasso, acted at Ferrara in 1573. This celebrated poem is quite simple in plot; but its design is allegorical, and the Arcadia presented by it is a reflexion of the Ferrara court, the poet himself appearing as one of the shepherds (Tirsi). Adorned with choral lyrics of great beauty[1], the *Aminta* is substantially an allegorical treatment of a social and moral problem, applied so subtly as to touch the minds of its audience without apparent effort. Yet the conduct of the personages, who uniformly neither speak nor think of aught but the passion of love, is wholly artificial; and the charm of the poem lies not in the interest of its action, but in the ardour and sweetness of its sentiment[2].

Guarini's Pastor Fido.

Passing by other Italian pastoral and (piscatorial) dramas more or less based on the model of the *Aminta*, we finally come to the *Pastor Fido* (1590, but written some years earlier) of Battisto Guarini (1537–1612). It seems to have been produced in rivalry of Tasso's *Aminta*, which had by this time been printed. Founded on a tragic love-story related by Pausanias[3], it largely adds to and complicates the intrigue, and introduces a comic element, partly with a satirical intention. One of the most charming scenes[4] leads to one of the most touching situations; while in the end a tragic complication is happily solved.

This famous production, while attracting unbounded popularity (the edition of 1602 is the twentieth), at the same time provoked much criticism, centring in an objection that addressed itself rather to the mixture of tragedy and comedy in general—in other words to *tragi-comedy* proper —than to the pastoral drama in particular. This is the objection to which Jonson makes reference in the Prologue to his *Sad Shepherd*[1]. It requires no special refutation in this place, inasmuch as it obviously applies to the romantic drama at large. The liberty which the classical drama allowed itself within the limits of the tetralogy, the romantic assumed as its right within the limits of a single play. In the pastoral drama the mixture seems, if anything, more specially admissible, inasmuch as the sphere of characters in which its action necessarily moves is not heroic of its kind.

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[1] The theme of one of the choruses is the glorification of the maxim '*s' ci piace, ci lice,*' to which Guarini in his *Pastor Fido* opposed the '*Piaccia se lice,*'—the '*Erlaubt ist was gefällt*' and '*Erlaubt ist was sich ziemt*' of Goethe's *Tasso*. Cf. Klein, vol. v. p. 141.

[2] Cf. Sismondi, *Lit. of Europe*, vol. i. pp. 399-401 [Engl. Tr.].

[3] Bk. vii. c. 21.—As Klein (vol. v. p. 180) observes, the title of Guarini's piece ought properly to be *La Pastorella Fida*.

[4] The *giuoco della cieca*, the shepherdesses' game at blindman's-buff, in which Amarilli catches Mirtillo, but will not allow herself to be held fast by him. The soliloquy of passionate desire which follows was placed on the Index.

Inherent defects of the modern pastoral drama.

In truth, the objections to the pastoral drama as a permanent type of art lie far deeper. Its double origin, noted above, has vitiated its growth; the pastoral dramatist, like the pastoral poet in general, has been found perpetually hovering on the boundary-line between the real and the symbolical, between a direct and an allegorical meaning. Moreover, the machinery of its earliest and most perfect models has never without difficulty proved exchangeable for one appropriate to times and scenes different from those of the classical eclogues; and either the classical mythology has had to be retained, or a less pliant mythology to be substituted, or an imaginary one to be invented. The entire notion of shepherds or fishermen living under primitive conditions, under the influence of beliefs drawn from a religious system springing directly out of the observation of nature, and with manners and customs at once simple and poetic, is incapable of commending itself to the modern mind, and least of all capable of realisation on the modern stage[1].

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[1] 'But here's an heresy of late let fall,
That mirth by no means fits a Pastoral;
Such say so who can make none, he presumes:
Else there's no scene more properly assumes
The sock. For whence can sport in kind arise
But from the rural routs and families?'

In his *Conversations* Jonson blames Guarini for 'making Shepherds speak as well as himself would'; but as Klein points out (vol. v. p. 227), Guarini's Italian critics had no conception of the poetico-dramatic humour which he unmistakeably lacked.—On Guarini and the *Pastor Fido* generally see the very interesting observations in Symonds' *Renaissance in Italy*, vol. vii. (1886), pp. 262–278.—Izaac Walton in his *Life of Sir Henry Wotton*, after mentioning that the latter, when at Queen's College, Oxford (1586–8 *c.*), wrote for the private use of the College a tragedy called *Tancredo*, adds that 'though there may be some sour dispositions, which may think this not worth a memorial, yet that wise Knight, Baptist Guarini (whom learned Italy accounts one of her ornaments), thought it neither an uncomely, nor an unprofitable employment for his age.'

Artificiality of the Elisabethan pastoral drama.

The English pastoral drama—where it is intended as anything but a simple reproduction of the life of real English shepherds—is, like the bulk of English pastoral poetry in general, either artificial or burlesque. The Elisabethan pastoral drama belonged to the former class.

To the artificialities of Lyly and his followers it is unnecessary here to return. The popularity of the *Pastor Fido*, to which Jonson makes pointed reference in his *Volpone*[2], no doubt gave the main impulse to the cultivation of the pastoral drama, of which further instances will have to be noticed in the same period of our dramatic literature. Among these, Fletcher's *Faithful Shepherdess* must for beauty of execution be allowed the palm. But no author contrived with so much ingenuity and so much true poetic feeling as were exhibited by Jonson to reduce the artificial element in the pastoral drama to a *minimum*, or came so near as he did towards nationalising in our dramatic literature an essentially foreign growth.

The Sad Shepherd.

In its design *The Sad Shepherd* is a pastoral pure and simple, free from all secondary intentions of a symbolical or satirical character. The reference to the 'sourer sort of shepherds,' indeed, conveys a thinly-veiled attack upon the Puritan ministers of the day, and among the joyous rites defended against their protests, those of which the author was himself a votary can hardly have been absent from his mind[1]. But the allusion, contrasting directly, as to the spirit in which it is conceived, with certain famous salient passages in the pastoral poetry of Spenser and Milton, is quite naturally introduced, and the current tone of the play is most easily and harmoniously resumed. The love-scenes between Robin and Maid Marian are very gay and natural, and observe with admirable tact the line beyond which rustic simplicity becomes rusticity.

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[1] In Spain, where pastoral fiction enjoyed so unequalled a popularity in the formal times of Philip II and III, in England during the 'Augustan' age, and in France in the Watteau period, the artificiality of the species was always an open secret to those who cultivated it.

[2] Act iii. sc. 2: 'Here 's Pastor Fido

. . . .

All our English writers,
I mean such as are happy in the Italian,
Will deign to steal out of this author, mainly;

. . . .

He has so happy and facile a vein,
Fitting the time and catching the court-ear.'

Of the *Pastor Fido* an English translation (described by Dyce as, 'in spite of Daniel's commendatory verses, a very bad one') was published in 1602. In the same year a version of the *Aminta* ('somewhat altered') in English hexameters by Abraham Fraunce, appeared in *The Countesse of Pembroke's Yuychurch, &c.* (See Dyce's Introduction to Fletcher's *Faithful Shepherdess* in *Works*, vol. ii. p. 3.) Randolph's *Amyntas* (1638), briefly noticed below, is in respect of plot independent of Tasso.

Considerable inventive power is also shown in the contrivance of the machinery of the play. Instead of gods and goddesses, nymphs and satyrs, the supernatural agents are a witch and her attendant Puck-Hairy, whom, notwithstanding Gifford, I cannot regard in any other light than that of an unregenerate Puck[2]. The witch Maudlin and her son and daughter talk Lowland Scotch, although the scene of the play is laid in Sherwood Forest; Jonson having, maybe, had in mind the fact that Scotland was 'more particularly the region of witchcraft[3].' Thus, so far as the play proceeds, we are not distracted by any intolerable mixture of associations, although of course passages occur suggested by classical reminiscences, of Theocritus in particular.

High praise is therefore due to Jonson's experiment—unhappily preserved to us in an unfinished state. In *The Sad Shepherd* he has with singular freshness caught the spirit of the greenwood. If this pastoral is more realistic in texture than either Spenser's or Milton's efforts in the same direction, the result is due, partly to the character of the writer, partly to the circumstance that Jonson's 'shepherds' are beings of a definite age and country. It must, however, be observed that the personages of this pastoral are in part not shepherds at all, but Robin Hood and his merry men. We may admit that the lucky combination thus hit upon could probably not easily be repeated; but this is merely to acknowledge the felicity of the author's invention. But the play has merits besides those of invention; there is some poetic passion in the laments of Æglamour, and some gentle tenderness in the sufferings of poor little Amie. The witch and her son are vigorously drawn [1].

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[1] Act i. sc. 2. Prynne's *Histriomastix* had been published in 1633.

[2] Robin Goodfellow makes his appearance in Jonson's masque of *Love Restored*, presented at Court 1610-11.

[3] See Waldron, Preface, p. viii. The additional conjecture that Maudlin 'was originally of that country' (Scotland ; 'banished it for her misdeeds, like Shakspeare's Sycorax from Argier ; and now settled in a more southern part of the island,' is, to say the least, unnecessary, besides suggesting an odd sort of punishment for a Scottish witch.

The May Lord (lost).

Jonson composed another pastoral drama under the title of *The May Lord*, which has unfortunately been lost [2]. In the description of it given by him to Drummond, and in part cited above [3], he furnishes the key to some of the personages allegorically introduced into this piece, including himself under the name of Alk*i*n, who in the 'first storie . . . commeth in mending his broken pipe.' Alk*e*n, a 'sage shepherd,' also appears in *The Sad Shepherd*; and this circumstance, together with certain other coincidences of a less striking kind, has led Mr. Fleay to the conclusion that these two pastoral dramas were in fact one and the same play [4]. I cannot, however, regard this conclusion as satisfactorily established. Jonson, it may be added, further informed Drummond that he had 'intention to write a fisher or pastorall play, and sett the stage of it in the Lowmond lake.' There is no reason for supposing that he carried out this design[1].

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[1] *The Sad Shepherd* was continued by Waldron, and published in this form with Notes and an Appendix (1783). With the exception of the third act (for his share in which he had the guidance of Ben Jonson's *Argument*) the continuation is all Waldron's own invention, although passages from other authors are made use of, in what he conceives would have been the spirit of Ben Jonson, while one speech is chiefly borrowed from Jonson himself. Waldron (whose notes are very useful) was, however, unequal to this part of his task; what he has added could hardly be mistaken by the least sophisticated reader for genuine Jonson; many of his lines bear the stamp of the age in which they were produced, nor is the grammar always perfect. The invention of the second part of the plot is, however, fairly sufficient, though Waldron takes too much trouble to marry every good personage of the drama at the close, and to convert every bad one. The repentance of the witch reads like that of a sinner freshly awakened by suitable admonition.

[2] *The Rape of Proserpine*, which perished in the burning of Jonson's library, must have been in narrative form.

[3] *Ante*, p. 380, *note*.

[4] *English Drama*, vol. ii. pp. 379 *seqq.* 'Somerset's Lady,' one of the personages mentioned by Jonson to Drummond, he supposes to be Douce, the Witch's daughter, in *The Sad Shepherd*.—Mr. Fleay was followed in his general conclusion by the late Mr. Symonds in his study of Ben Jonson.

The Masque.

It remains briefly to notice the creative activity of Ben Jonson in what can hardly be regarded as a branch of dramatic literature proper, although the points of contact between this species of composition and the drama are too numerous to admit of its being passed by in the present survey. In an earlier passage of this book, when adverting to the history of the origin of the masque, I pointed out that no intrinsic difference seems traceable between the entertainments called by this un-English name and those which had for some time previously been customary at Court and in the great houses of the nobility[2]. I hazarded the conjecture, to which I attach no great importance, but which still seems to me to have probability in its favour, that the masque originally was nothing more or less than a dance with masks; but that soon—before those ulterior developements on which I am now about to touch—it practically came to be nothing but a more elaborate form of the old 'disguisings[3].' A dance always remained the central point of the masque—the pivot, so to speak, on which the structure turned; but in other respects it proved quite as elastic as the entertainments which in name, at all events, it largely superseded. The distinction between a *masque* and a *disguising* cannot in any case be regarded as an essential difference; and the proportions, for instance, in which any one of Jonson's masques introduces and intermixes the elements of declamation, dialogue, music, costume, decoration, and scenery, are determined by no inner law, but merely by the dictates of custom, and by the circumstances of each particular case. And if the history of the masque in England be viewed as a whole, it must, from a literary point of view, be allowed in its least elaborate form to approach very nearly to the pageant, so persistently favoured by the citizens and 'prentices of London; while, where the characters were more carefully worked out, where something in the nature of a plot kept the whole together, and where an action, or the semblance of an action, was introduced, it trenched to some extent upon the domain of the drama.

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[1] As to his supposed share in Middleton's comedy of *The Witch*, see the remarks on that play, below.

[2] *Ante*, vol. i. p. 150.

[3] In his admirably exhaustive dissertation, *Die Englischen Maskenspiele* (Halle, 1882), which so far as I know furnishes the best review yet printed of the entire subject, Dr. A. Soergel takes me to task for both these conjectures. But he fails to suggest any different origin for the term *masque*; or to sustain even his assertion that 'shortly after the introduction of the *masque* it seems to have been customary to observe an accurate distinction between it and the *disguising*.'

Its nature that of an occasional device.

It would carry me beyond my purpose to enter on the present occasion into any detailed examination of the progress made in the devising and execution of these entertainments during the Elisabethan age and the period immediately succeeding it. The masque took the first step towards becoming a literary species when spoken words were introduced into the entertainment[1]; and as these words came more and more frequently to be spoken 'in character,' and to suit themselves to the form as well as the spirit of the device which they were intended to explain, illustrate, or emphasise, the dramatic side became correspondingly prominent[2]. But in the later as well as in the earlier phases of its developement, the success of a masque depends, to a far greater degree than is the case with the regular drama, upon external aids. Designed for an effect which must be immediate, and as a rule cannot be expected to be other than transitory, a masque may fairly claim not to be judged apart from all the elements which it has with more or less felicity combined in its device. Nor will the consideration be overlooked that just as it is intended for a special occasion, so a masque also addresses itself to a particular audience, intent upon applying in one particular direction the suggestions supplied to it. In a word, every masque is of its nature what the French call a *pièce d'occasion*; and no such piece can be thoroughly appreciated apart from the occasion itself.

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[1] Cf. Soergel, *u. s.*, pp. 17–19. The first notice of a masque introduced by a speech is said to occur in 1571, but there is no proof that this was an innovation. Gascoigne's device of a *Mask for Viscount Montacute* (dated by Mr. Fleay 1572) contains a speech explanatory of the choice of Venetian costume for the masquers.

[2] Quite distinct from this, but interesting as illustrating in a peculiar way the allegorical use of the masque, is its introduction into the action of stage-plays proper. This practice, of which there are traces already in some of the moralities, became common in the Elisabethan drama, and numerous instances, of which the most noteworthy is the masque in *The Tempest*, will be found mentioned in these volumes. See the observations on what he terms the *Dramenmaske*, *ap.* Soergel, *u. s.*, pp. 88 *seqq.*

Its consequent difficulties.

At the same time, the masque, and all entertainments partaking of the same character, make a strong demand upon the inventive powers of those who have been called upon to devise it. While the significance of the particular device is more or less given or implied, the method of suiting it to the significance is left to the inventor. Forced to move within narrow limits, to suit special tastes, often to meet a particular occasion, he must at the same time above all things not be lacking in novelty. And he is bound to satisfy curiosity where in one sense everybody knows what is coming, and to please by originality without permitting himself to be original, except at the risk of impairing the symmetry of the programme.

So far, therefore, as the literary side of the masque is concerned, a successful result can only be achieved by a writer of unflagging inventive power, of great quickness in discovering and making clear associations between the actual and the imaginary, and of a learning never at fault in bringing allegorical figures or symbolical situations to bear upon the desired effect. To these requisites a true poet may add the gift of carrying his audience beyond the mere occasion of his device, and thus, while starting from a point of others' choosing, raising himself and them as it were unconsciously into a loftier sphere.

Jonson's success as a writer of masques.

Ben Jonson is the most successful, as he is the most prolific, author of masque. Many of his numerous compositions belonging to this class hold an enduring place in our poetic literature; and, taken together, his achievements in this branch furnish evidence almost unsurpassed in its fulness as to the fecundity and versatility of his poetic genius. He was characteristically conscious of his powers in this field of literary labour;—'next himself,' he said, 'only Fletcher and

Chapman could make a Mask.' Fortune favoured him in the occupation of the English throne by a patron whose learned tastes—and the limits within which those tastes are in scholars of his type restricted—led him to regard this species of intellectual entertainment with peculiar favour. The last infirmity of even a higher order of scholarship than that reached by James I, is to pride itself on its ready perception of allusions; and allusiveness, whether with or without explanations, is the very atmosphere of the masque. But the favour so widely extended to this kind of entertainments in the Jacobean age was chiefly due to other causes. These must be sought in the love of an elaborate and, in a sense, refined splendour which was characteristic of the times, and in the signal advance noticeable in them of the decorative arts, whose foremost representative, Inigo Jones, was gifted with a genius of rare versatility and force. In addition, the circumstances under which the masques were ordinarily produced gratified that aristocratic exclusiveness, or would-be exclusiveness, which sets the stamp upon fashionable success; while these entertainments furnished the great nobles and ministers, and other pillars or pilasters of the throne, with constant opportunities for extravagant adulation of a sovereign, beyond the top of whose bent in this respect it was not easy to soar.

Congeniality of this form to his powers and acquirements.

But if the times suited this species of production, no man was so uniquely fitted as Jonson to meet the demand for it. The strength of his dramatic genius lay in his power of inventing a vast variety of distinct characters; and characters, or their semblance—not action, or even the shadow of action—constitute the main dramatic element of the masque. His learning was quite unapproached by that of any contemporary dramatic poet; and it supplied him with an inexhaustible store of figures and situations for his purpose. In conformity with the traditions of the later Renascence, to which English scholarship and the public impressed by it were to cling with so unsurpassed a fidelity, he preferred to seek the material for his devices in classical mythology; and his familiarity with the latter was genuine. Lastly, it was part of his nature to work with his whole strength at whatever task he essayed, to throw himself into it heart and soul, and never to allow himself to be hampered by doubts as to the importance of any literary labours to which he had set his hand. He defended with no half-hearted ardour the dignity of what seemed to him the most excellent type of masque[1], and bitterly resented the endeavour (or what he supposed to be such) to subordinate its poetic or literary element to mere external adjuncts[2]. He was not, indeed, enduringly successful in maintaining the claims of the literary element in the masque against the representations of the decorative element; and his soul, if I may so say, kicked against compromise, which in this instance if anywhere was imposed by the situation. Reference has already been made to his quarrel with Inigo Jones—'Iniquo Vitruvius' as he came sarcastically to salute him[3]. Through good times and things bad, he in this as in most other instances remained faithful to his ideal. Even on the less vital question of the choice of sources for the treatment of his themes, he upheld his own notions against those of other successful writers of masques, who were less intent upon 'the more removed mysteries' of composition, and rightly as it seems to us claimed his birthright of free choice even as against the august 'tyranny' of classical antiquity[4].

Characteristics of Jonson's masques.

From the above remarks it will be easy to gather the general characteristics, as they present themselves to my judgment, of this division of Jonson's works[1]. It attests an all but inexhaustible inventiveness on the part of the poet, who derives his devices mainly from classical mythology (in which instances he loves to supply in his notes chapter and verse as to the sources of erudition), but also at times from later legend or history. The construction of his masque was the least part of the labour involved; but on this head Jonson (apparently in deference to the tastes of the king) in his later masques almost invariably adopted an ingenious innovation which furnished him with admirable opportunities for the display of his comic powers. This was the *anti-masque*[2], defined by Schlegel as a species of 'parody which the poet himself occasionally adds to his invention, and generally prefixes to the serious entry[3].'

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[1] See the remarks prefatory to *Hymenaei*: 'This it is hath made the most royal princes and greatest persons (who are commonly the personators of these actions) not only studious of riches and magnificence in the outward celebration or show, which rightly becomes them, but curious after the most high and hearty inventions, to furnish the inward parts, and those grounded upon antiquity and solid learning: which, though their voice be taught to sound to present occasions, their sense or doth or shall always lay hold on more removed mysteries,' &c.

[2] See *An Expostulation with Inigo Jones*, whom he accuses of seeking to assert that

'Painting and carpentry are the soul of mask.'

[3] See *Love's Welcome at Bolsover*.

[4] See the very probable conjecture of Soergel, *u. s.*, p. 35, that Samuel Daniel's recriminations in the 'Explanatory Dedication' of his *Vision of the Twelve Goddesses*, and in the preface to his *Tethys' Festival*, are directed against these pretensions of Ben Jonson, whose opinion of Daniel was that 'he was a good honest man, had no children, but no poet' (*Conversations*, iii).

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[1] For further observations on the subject, see, besides Soergel's dissertation, J. Schmidt, *Über Ben Jonson's Maskenspiele*, in Herrig's *Archiv, &c.*, vol. xxvii. pp. 51–91; also the opening remarks of K. Elze, *Zum Sommernachtstraum*, in *Jahrbuch*, vol. iii. 1868.

[2] So the name is usually spelt; although, notwithstanding Gifford, its derivation seems to be either *ante-masque* (since it almost invariably precedes the masque proper), or more probably *antick-masque*. Stowe actually speaks of 'an antique or mock-mask of Baboons' which preceded a masque by Chapman in representation. And the term 'antic' is frequently used of a dance in character as well as of the dances engaged in it. Cf. Soergel, p. 45. Ben Jonson's own definition of the anti-masque, however, as 'a foil, or false mask,' favours the ordinary spelling. See his prefatory observations to the *Masque of Queens* (1609), where, as Soergel correctly points out, he expressly refers to his own introduction of 'an anti-masque of boys' into *The Hue and Cry after Cupid*, produced in the previous year. There is, however, no proof that Jonson was the inventor of the innovation in question. These anti-masques were for the most part performed by actors hired from the theatres. See the *note* in Nichols' *Progresses of James I*, iii. 33.—An anti-masque is referred to as something introduced, outside of the argument, 'to entertain time,' in Middleton's *Women Beware Women* (act v. sc. 1). The importance attached by the spectators to the 'nimble anti-masque' as the 'jollity' in the entertainment is illustrated by a passage in Shirley's *Triumph of Peace* (*ad in.*).

[3] In Shirley's *The Traitor* (act iii. sc. 2) a masque is exhibited allegorising the doom of a debauchee. 'Lust, the Pleasures and the young Man join in the dance.' 'By and bye,' says Sciarrha,

> 'You shall see all his tormentors
> Join with them; there's the sport on't.'

'Methinks,' objects Lorenzo, 'they

> Should have been first, for th' anti-mask.'

But Sciarrha explains that

> 'In hell they do not stand upon the method
> As we at court.'

Lyrical passages.

It thus, as the same critic suggests, supplied an antidote to the excess of sweetness with which the flattery contained in the masque itself might be liable to cloy the audience. And it furnished Jonson in particular with opportunities for the introduction of many humorous characters, lightly but vigorously drawn, and even of comic situations worthy of his dramatic powers. Taken as a whole, the execution of most of these masques is more than adequate, and frequently rises to a high level. Jonson's lyrical gift, which has been unjustly depreciated, here finds many opportunities of displaying itself with uncommon ease and grace[1]. It cannot be asserted of him that he raised the masque to the highest poetic level of which this species of production is capable—this achievement was reserved for a genius of a different order; but it would be an erroneous judgment which should undervalue the learning, the ingenuity, and the creative vigour which in these productions he most abundantly displays. The union of these qualities, accompanied by much true eloquence and lyrical beauty, imparts a lasting value to many of these inventions of his fancy, called forth by a taste artificial indeed, but neither ignoble in itself nor degrading to the poet who ministered to its demands[2].

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[1] 'A masque is prepared,' says Hippolito in Shirley's *Love's Cruelty* (act ii. sc. 2), 'and music to charm Orpheus himself into a stone; numbers presented to your ear that shall speak the soul of the immortal English Jonson.'—In connexion with Ben Jonson's lyrics, it may be noted that the hypothesis is regarded as disproved, according to which he wrote the words of the National Anthem for music by Dr. John Bull on the occasion of an entertainment given to King James I at Merchant Taylors' Hall, 1607, when *Non nobis* seems to have been for the first time sung as a grace, with a reference to the Gunpowder Plot—this being the first instance on record of the singing of a grace'. See Nichols' *Progresses, &c. of King James I*, ii. 142–3.

[2] The following is a list of Jonson's Masques and Entertainments. Some of these, though first printed in the Folio of 1616, were also included in *Certayne Masques at the Court never yet printed, written by* Ben Jonson, licensed 1615, of which a MS. copy, signed by him, is in the British Museum.—For an account of most of Jonson's entertainments in their chronological order of production among the entertainments of the reign of King James I, see Nichols' *Progresses, &c. of King James I*, where several errors in matters of detail occurring in Gifford are corrected.—Soergel, *u.s.*, pp. 72–5, has attempted a complete list of all extant English masques.

Part of King James' Entertainment in passing to his Coronation (1603).
This consists of devices for the decoration of parts of London and of

Jonson's characteristics as a dramatist summarised.

Ben Jonson appears to me beyond compare the most remarkable of the English dramatists contemporary with Shakspere. The most salient characteristics of his dramatic

'speeches of gratulation' to be spoken by allegorical and mythological personages.

The Satyr (Lord Spencer's entertainment for the Queen and Prince Henry at Althorpe, 1603). A very pretty and light piece, in short couplets running with extreme facility. Queen Anne is here (and in the next) Oriana:

> 'Long live Oriana,
> T' exceed, whom she succeeds, our late Diana'—

certainly a prettier name than Bel-Anna (as in the Theobalds entertainment).

'*The Penates*' (so called by Gifford), (Sir William Cornwallis' entertainment at Highgate, 1604). A mixture of prose and verse; the jokes addressed to the several lords and ladies of the Court, the personal points of which are of course lost, exhibit a spirit of joyous gaiety, and prove Jonson's familiarity with the *personalia* of Court life.

Entertainment of the two Kings of Great Britain and Denmark (Christian IV) *at Theobalds* (1606). The memory of this entertainment is however submerged in that of the great drinking-bout between these august kinsmen.

Entertainment of King James and Queen Anne at Theobalds (1607), 'when the house was delivered up, with the possession, to the Queen by the Earl of Salisbury' (who received Hatfield in exchange). Very prettily conceived: the Genius of the House exchanges his sorrow at the loss of a master for joy at the acquisition of such a mistress.

The Masque of Blackness (1606); *The Masque of Beauty* (1609). Ingeniously contrived and gracefully executed. Inigo Jones devised 'the bodily part' of the former—the Queen suggesting 'limits' for the author's invention. According to Collier, vol. i. p. 349 and *note*, its occasion was the marriage of Sir Philip Herbert and Lady Susan Vere. *The Masque of Beauty* contains some pleasing lyrical strophes of a simple kind.

Hymenaei (1606), *or the Solemnities of Mask and Barriers* (*i. e.* tournament) at the ill-omened marriage of the Earl and Countess of Essex. Jonson's favourite 'Humours' take part in the action, and he learnedly defends himself for making them and the Affections masculine. The very pretty Epithalamium, imitated (as well as another passage) from Catullus, though effective in its simplicity, is I think overpraised by Gifford.

'*The Hue and Cry after Cupid*' (so called by Gifford), a masque at Lord Haddington's marriage at Court with Lady Elisabeth Ratcliffe (1608). Here, too, is an Epithalamium; besides some very pretty lyrical strophes by the Graces in search of Cupid. Cf. Spenser, *Shepherd's Kalendar* (*March*). It is founded on the first Idyll of Moschus, likewise imitated by Tasso in his *Amore Fuggitivo.* 'Venus' runaway' in Ben Jonson is identical with the 'runaway' of Juliet's speech in *Romeo and Juliet,* act iii. sc. 2, so feebly altered into 'unawares.' Cf. a suggestive article, *Der älteste Steckbrief,* in *Allgemeine Zeitung, Beilage,* January 7, 1877.

The Masque of Queens (1609). This masque, described by Mr. Swinburne as 'the most splendid of all masques,' and 'one of the typically splendid genius will, I hope, have become apparent from the survey attempted above; but it may be worth while to dwell upon them for a moment in conjunction, before passing on to

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monuments or trophies of English literature,' derives a special interest from its introduction of the witches. Cunningham points out that Jonson cites Hector Boëce; and I agree with Gifford that 'the Dame' is superior to Hecate in *Macbeth*. Cf. as to the date of *Macbeth*, *ante*, pp. 170–1. The date of Middleton's *Witch* is uncertain. King James's *Daemonology* was written ten years before this masque.

The Speeches at Prince Henry's Barriers (1610). The Lady of the Lake and King Arthur (appearing as a star in the heavens) exchange harangues; and Merlin thereupon exhibits a kind of diorama of British history which is tolerably prosaic and contains some very poor lines. The prophecy as to the Princess Elisabeth, when compared with its half fulfilment, in a way little dreamt of by the poet, is curious enough.

Oberon the Fairy Prince (1611), a fresh and charming piece, in which, however, the Satyrs are rather over-vivacious for a Court entertainment. As to Gifford's suppositions concerning these two pieces, cf. Nichols, *u. s.*, vol. ii. p. 271, and Collier, vol. i. pp. 362–3; but see Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. ii. p. 5.

Love Freed from Ignorance and Folly (1610–11). The riddling of the *Sphinx* (cf. Schiller's *Turandot*) and the final answer of Love are decidedly ingenious.

Love Restored (1610–11). Robin Goodfellow's account of his difficulties in obtaining admission to the masque, with side-hits at the citizens, is very entertaining. As to the date see, however, the doubts and conjectures of Mr. Fleay, *u. s.*, pp. 7–8.

A Challenge at Tilt (1613). Two Cupids, one the servant of the bride, the other of a bridegroom, challenge one another after 'a marriage.' (The occasion was thus vaguely designated in the Folio, as it was that of the marriage of Somerset to the Countess of Essex, then a subject of universal execration. Cf. Nichols, *u. s.*, vol. ii. p. 715.)

The Irish Masque (1613–4), chiefly in the Irish dialect, in honour of King 'Yamish's' successful Irish policy. John Chamberlain, writing to Sir Dudley Carleton, January 6, 1614, has the following memorable criticism: 'The Irish masquers were so well liked at Court the last week, that they were appointed to perform again on Monday; yet their device, which was a mimical imitation of the Irish, was not pleasing to many, who think it no time, as the case stands, to exasperate that nation, by making it ridiculous.' (*Court and Times of James I.* vol. i. p. 287.) This masque again alludes to the wretched marriage celebrated at this time.

Mercury Vindicated from the Alchemists (1614). Mercury attacks the alchemists in a long prose speech. (Cf. *ante*, p. 368, *note*.) This contains an anti-masque.

The Golden Age Restored (1615). This piece has a real poetic afflatus, and, true to his sense of the dignity of literature, the poet introduces Chaucer, Gower, Lydgate, and Spenser as representatives of the Golden Age, with which they are to return with their 'better flames and larger light.'

Christmas his Masque (1616–7). Certainly not much superior in conception writers inferior to him in their actual achievements, even if not in their natural gifts.

His acquirements.

In respect of acquired powers, it will hardly be denied

to the Introduction to many a Christmas pantomime of our own days, but a popular ballad-tone is happily caught in Christmas' Song.

The Vision of Delight (1617). Likewise contains an anti-masque. The extraordinary copiousness of phraseology in Phant'sie's dream-medley is worthy of notice.

'*The Masque of Lethe*' (1617); *Lovers Made Men* (so entitled in Jonson's quarto). or, as named by Gifford. Contains an anti-masque.

Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue (1618; mentioned as of this date in Rawdon Brown's MS. translation of the *Venetian Diaries and Dispatches*). Remarkable as containing the characters of Comus and his Rout. How true, and of how wide an application, is the lesson of the lines:

> 'Grace, laughter and discourse may meet,
> And yet the beauty not go less:
> For what is noble should be sweet,
> But not dissolved in wantonness.'

This masque 'pleased the King so well, as he would have it again'—thereby certainly showing power of judgment—'when it was presented with these additions.'

For the Honour of Wales (an anti-masque), (first produced 'two symmers' before). A facetious intermixture of Welsh local patriotism and loyalty. Cf. *The Irish Masque* (*ante*).

News from the New World Discovered in the Moon (1620–1). Written by Jonson on his return from Edinburgh, as he reminds the audience in a not very modest passage. The humorous dialogue descriptive of the moon (a fancy often reproduced by comic writers) well introduces the anti-masque of the 'Volatees,' followed by the masque proper.

The Gipsies Metamorphosed (1621) appears to have been a favourite piece, for it was reproduced (after its original performance at Buckingham's seat of Burley-on-the-Hill) at two other places (Belvoir and Windsor). Hence there are two prologues. (The abuse of the 'devil's own weed' must have particularly gratified the King.) This is one of the gayest and liveliest of Jonson's Court entertainments. After some introductory talking, singing, and dancing by the gypsies (with whose language Jonson exhibits a familiarity which would be surprising in any other author), they tell the fortunes of the King, Queen, Prince Charles, and great lords and ladies, which affords an opportunity for abundant compliments. The song of Cocklorrel (a dynastic name assumed by a series of Kings of the London Rogues), long continued famous. The Captain of the Gypsies seems to have been represented by Buckingham. King James was so much pleased by the flattery administered to him in this piece that he raised the poet's pension.

The Masque of Augurs (1623). Introduced by an anti-masque of comic prose.

Time Vindicated to Himself and his Honours (1624). A satirical attack upon scurrilous inquisitiveness, provoked by the satires in vogue, ending with a praise of hunting to the King's address. The *Chronomastix* in this masque is the poet George Wither, author of *Abuses stript and Whipt* that he was infinitely the best equipped of the Elisabethan dramatists. Of his learning enough has been said to render further repetition needless. It was for his age extremely varied, and, judged by an even higher standard than that of his age, thoroughly solid. He was worthy of being the pupil of Camden and the friend of Selden. His studies, while by no means confined to the Greek and Roman classics ordinarily read in his days, commanded this familiar range with unusual completeness. They included the Greek

His classical

(1613). Cf. Nichols, *u. s.*, vol. iv. p. 802; it was included in his *Juvenilia* (1622). Fleay, p. 14.

Neptune's Triumph for the Return of Albion (1624). In honour of Prince Charles' return from Spain (after the breaking-off of the Spanish match). The chief interlocutors are a Poet and a Cook; the Cook's praise of his art may be compared with later efforts of the same kind. The masque, though much practised, was never performed till 1626, when a new Introduction was added (*v. infra*). Cf. Nichols, *u. s.*, vol. iv. p. 948.

Pan's Anniversary, or The Shepherd's Holiday (1623 or 4; cf. Fleay, *u. s.*, p. 14). The last masque witnessed by King James. It opens very prettily with a catalogue of flowers.

The Masque of Owls, at Kenelworth (1624; see Nichols, vol. iv. p. 997), is not, properly speaking, a masque at all, but a comic soliloquy delivered before Prince Charles 'by the Ghost of Captain Cox, mounted in his Hobby-Horse,' who exhibits a series of characters as 'Owls.' (Cf. as to Captain Cox, *ante*, vol. i. p. 144, *note*.)

The Fortunate Isles (1625) was the name under which, with a new Introduction, and an anti-masque, *Neptune's Triumph* (*v. ante*), was at last performed. Howleglass (*alias* Owlglass or Ulenspiegel) is leader of the fun. As to the history of this famous character in English and Scottish literature cf. Herford, *Studies, &c.*, pp. 283 *seqq.*

Love's Triumph through Callipolis (1631; see Fleay, p. 17. King Charles I himself performed in this masque.

Chloridia: Rites to Chloris and her Nymphs (1631–2). It would appear that the failure of this masque, presented by the Queen and her ladies, which Inigo Jones attributed to Jonson's part of the work, produced the quarrel between the pair.

Love's Welcome at Welbeck (the entertainment of King Charles 'at his going into Scotland' by the Earl of Newcastle, 1633). Cf. C. H. Firth's edition of *The Life of the Duke of Newcastle*, by the Duchess, pp. 190-2. A slight comic piece (introducing a course at Quintain) with a serious ending.

Love's Welcome at Bolsover (a repetition of the same device before the King at another of the Earl's mansions, five miles from Welbeck, 1634). Cf. *ib.*, pp. 201–3.

To these may be added an *Interlude*, which seems to have been written for the christening of a son of the same nobleman, at which the King and the Prince were present, one of them standing godfather. It is certainly a very coarse piece of fun for so grand an occasion, but it shows how Jonson could make himself master even of nurses' *specialia*.

philosophers as well as the Roman historians and poets. They embraced less known ancient writers as well as the classics proper, extending to Libanius and Athenaeus as well as to Lucian and Plutarch, and to Tacitus and Vergil. They likewise covered a large field of later literature; taking in something of the mystic researches of Agrippa and Paracelsus, and enabling him to borrow from Erasmus and Rabelais keen shafts of critical satire; and it is clear that he had a knowledge of the German tongue. He was familiar with the works of the great philosopher of his own age. Of the older English poets he was a warm admirer; while in the English drama from its earliest to its most recent phases he knew his way as a matter of course. Of his classical learning his tragedies furnish the most direct evidence; but there is hardly one of his comedies, or even of his masques, which is not full of illustrations of the reading prized in 'both Universities.' His pride in it is excusable; and miscellaneous reader as he was, he may be pardoned the fact, that while he rejoiced in exhibiting his classical acquirements, he but rarely 'condescends to imitate a modern author[1].'

and modern learning.

His scholarship.

But not only was he a man of unusual learning; he may also be said to have been a scholar in the higher sense of the term. In saying this, I do not merely refer to the fact that he fairly satisfied the favourite test of English classical scholarship. His own performances as a Latin poet reach no very high level; but it would be difficult to show them to have been excelled by the efforts of any of his actual contemporaries. He read and reproduced what he read in scholarly fashion; in other words he studied critically, and assimilated what he acquired. Of his own art in particular he had mastered the theory as well as the practice. *Vetus comoedia* was to him no mere tradition, taken at second-hand from native schoolmasters or Italian practitioners, but a literary growth of which he had carefully studied the laws. And his veneration for Aristotle was no mere lip-service; he understood the definitions and the rules of the *Poetics* better than the pedants who, in later periods of our

His knowledge of the theory of the drama.

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[1] Coleridge, *u. s.*, p. 283.

dramatic literature, were so voluble in expounding their rule of faith.

His experience and observation of men and life.

His experience of men and life was, to say the least, as notable as were the extent and variety of his reading. In the course of his days he had passed through many vicissitudes; he had been a student, a tradesman, and a soldier before he became a public actor and dramatic author, and an agent in the amusements of the Court and the fashionable world. He was by no means an untravelled man; he knew something of the Flemish plains and the Paris streets; he perambulated the whole length of England; and no part of London can have been unfamiliar with the fall of his footstep. Thus, his powers of observation were fed by constant employment, and he could give full scope to his capacity for accumulating external details. He associated on terms of mutual respect with more than one great noble of the land; he accompanied the progresses of his royal patron; scholars and bookmen shared his festive hours; in the gatherings at the Mermaid his was doubtless the best-known as it was the most widely honoured presence; in the Apollo Room at the Devil he was the high-priest of 'the Oracle.' He knew the City as intimately as he knew the Court; he was not better attuned to the revels of highborn lords and ladies than he was to the sports of Bartholomew Fair and to the humours of suburban villages; 'no country's mirth,' he said, 'is better than our own'; and to the *fides oculata* of his observation the national life lay open, it might almost be said, in its whole multitudinous variety. Thus he can hardly touch on any sphere of that life, without showing how much he has seen and how much he has remembered. The technicalities of theology and law, the cant of false 'popular' science, the catchwords of mercantile speculation, the jargon of alchemists and exorcists, the fashionable parlance of high life and the slang of low, the terms and turns of speech, and the manners and customs of all classes, professions, trades, crafts and Bohemianisms, are as familiar to him as are the books of his unlucky library.

But these were merely the instruments with which he

Jonson not merely reproductive in a narrow sense.

worked. His scholarship and his power of observation could not have made him a great dramatist. Of course he had to encounter in life, and his fame has had to encounter since his death, the usual perfunctory criticism to which learned writers and writers displaying a wide observation of men and manners are liable. 'All book-learning!' exclaim the critics annoyed by the display—to be sure a trifle ostentatious—of the authorities whom he followed in his Roman tragedies. 'A mere sponge! nothing but humours and observation' is the accusation which he puts into the mouth of a professional adversary[1]; 'he goes up and down, sucking from every society, and when he comes home squeezes himself dry again.' Against such charges, were self-defence in a poet except in the rarest of cases ever successful, no man could have defended him better than he defended himself; but the admirers of his genius should unhesitatingly reject so perverse a conception of his creative powers. What made him a great dramatist cannot have been mere acquirements; it was necessary that the application of these should be directed by a high purpose and informed by gifts of original genius.

Elevation and definiteness of his purpose.

No poet—dramatic or otherwise—has ever shown himself more constantly animated by a lofty conception of his task than Ben Jonson. To be successful, he found it—as he came himself on occasion to confess—necessary to please; but mere transitory applause was never the goal of his ambition. Again and again he proclaims his determination to satisfy competent judges; again and again he recurs to the ideal of the true poet which he has before his eyes. But it is no vague highflown flights which he essays; no pretence of writing for an impossible public of a Utopian theatre which he puts forward. He not only keeps a definite goal steadily in view; but he has resolved on the path by which he will seek to reach it. Thus in either branch of the drama he sets before himself a distinct purpose. To maintain the dignity of tragedy on the level of what he recognises as its highest models; and in comedy to hold the mirror up to the ridiculous foibles and vices of human nature by realistically reproducing its most striking types of this description,—these are the ends which he consciously pursues.

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[1] See *The Poetaster*, iv. 1.

His dramatic powers.

Invention and construction of plots.

Conception and reproduction of character his chief strength.

His art of comic characterisation.

The specifically dramatic gifts he brought to the performance of his task were not indeed numerous, but each was of its kind indisputable. His inventive power was perhaps more considerable in the direction of construction than has been usually assumed. He depended to a far less degree than most of his contemporaries—Shakspere himself among them—upon borrowed plots; his apprenticeship as an adapter had perhaps been shorter than that of some of his rivals, but in the matter of plots he seems to have disliked to owe too much to other men. When in the vein, he could construct with lucidity and effectiveness, although in some of his best plots he was careless as to a symmetry which it would not have been difficult to observe, while he frequently showed himself better able to open an effective action than to sustain it. But in any case it was not here that his chief strength lay. His chief dramatic excellence is to be sought in his marvellous power of conceiving and reproducing character—a power which it is possible that he might have exercised more commandingly had he husbanded it with greater care[1]. The strength of his characters is universally acknowledged; they live for us like the personages of very few of our writers in the comic drama or in the comic novel. Dramatists have been known whose title to enduring popular fame is the creation of a single character; Jonson's works furnish forth a whole gallery whose names have become unexchangeable types. Captain Bobadil and Captain Tucca, Macilente and Fungoso, Volpone and Mosca, Sir John Daw and Sir Amorous La-Foole, and many others are remembered, not less distinctly if less widely, than Falstaff and his crew, than Parson Adams and Trulliber, than Micawber and Pecksniff. But it is not so readily recognised that Jonson perceived and abundantly exemplified the truth, that differences of character, as has been well said, become most readily apparent in the extreme points, and that it is by contrasting individualities at these that comedy—or comic fiction—will achieve its most subtly as well as powerfully effective results. To this result he was guided by his extraordinary gift of humour. Unless Jonson's humour is thoroughly appreciated, he will be unfairly judged. His characters are never more original than when they at first sight appear to resemble other characters, either created by himself or his contemporaries. If instead of pointing out where his personages—Bobadil may be taken as the most familiar example—resemble Shakspere's, a languid criticism would condescend to enquire where they differ from their supposed prototypes, a beginning would have been made towards an appreciation of Jonson's supreme merits as a comic dramatist. To label his personages as mere representatives of particular forms of vice or folly is to shut one's eyes to the nicety with which they are distinguished from others to which they bear a superficial likeness. There is hardly a single comedy among those of his better days where he fails to tax his powers to the utmost in this direction, without falling short of genuine success. But because he made matters easy to his hearers and readers by defining and describing the characters which he drew, he is set down as having done no more than define and describe; and the living realism of his humour is ignored.

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[1] Barry Cornwall, *Memoir*, p. xxxvii, observes that Jonson has too many characters. The same kind of criticism has sometimes seemed to me applicable, in a different branch of literature, to Dickens.

His humour.

The results of his labours:

With these literary purposes and these dramatic gifts, and with the aid of an extraordinary command of language capable of rising from the accurate reproduction of characteristic peculiarities of diction to lofty strains of moral indignation—as well as of a lyrical power of no common order—Jonson achieved the results which I have attempted to indicate.

in tragedy;

In tragedy he added two works of high, but not of the highest, merit to our dramatic literature. To set down *Sejanus* and *Catiline* as frigid seems to me, especially in the case of the former, to overshoot the mark. But the rhetorical element in both is excessive; and—in *Catiline* more particularly—the author hampers himself by too close an adherence to his historical authorities. While to the highest efforts of tragic passion his genius remains unequal. he commits the radical error of mistaking historical for dramatic truth, and labours without the sense of freedom indispensable to the great tragic poet. Thus he is unable to mould as a dramatist the materials which as a scholar he thoroughly commands. He sneers at the public for preferring the playbooks to the chronicles as 'more authentic': but in reality he has failed to seize the essential difference between the dramatised history and the historical drama. Thus, notwithstanding his sound learning and critical ability, and notwithstanding the powerful touches of character and passages of real eloquence introduced by him into his tragedies, they really mark a retrogression rather than an advance; and, paradoxical as the combination may appear, in the essence of their conception they partake of the imperfections of the old Chronicle History, while in execution they share their most marked feature with the rhetorical pseudo-classical drama of a later age.

in comedy.

In comedy, on the other hand, the great majority of Ben Jonson's productions show a most important progress[1]. His master-pieces realise the highest species of comedy more fully than anything which preceded them in our literature. For as such, at the risk of insisting on obsolete distinctions—obsolete however only if they are pressed beyond a legitimate limit of meaning, I venture again to designate that kind of comedy in which everything else is subordinated to the dramatic unfolding of character. Where this subordination is carried so far as to neglect the necessary substructure of an action interesting in itself and successfully adapted to the main object of the play, failure in this respect must of course be acknowledged. Thus, with all its merits, *Cynthia's Revels* must be allowed to fall considerably short of the requisite demands in this direction. *The Poetaster*, again, although more lucidly constructed, labours under the grave defect of a plot pieced rather than welded together. But unless I mistake, the proper measure and kind of action seem to be supplied in what may be regarded as Jonson's master-pieces, the twin plays in which he most transparently carried out his theory of Comedy, *viz.* in *Every Man in* and *Every Man out of his Humour*, and among his subsequent works in *Volpone* and *The Alchemist*. *Epicoene* ranks near these; but the farcical nature of its admirably constructed plot forbids its being placed on a level with them; while *The Devil is an Ass*, though in humour equal or nearly equal to them all, falls short in the conception of its central idea. In *The Staple of News* the rich humour of part of the execution cannot blind us to the confusing mixture of allegory and direct satire.

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[1] In the Restoration age it was still possible for Oldham in his Ode *Upon the Works of Ben Jonson* (1678), which is not devoid of good thoughts, to apostrophise him thus:—

> 'Hail, mighty Founder of our Stage! for so I dare
> Entitle thee, nor any modern censures fear.'

Jonson's comic characterisation vindicated as adequate.

In all these comedies, and to a less degree in the remaining comedies and in passages of the tragedies likewise, Jonson's power of drawing character finds endless opportunities for exhibiting itself. It has however been urged[1], that while he is constantly presenting striking types, he fails to exhibit in the action of his plays themselves the process of their developement. In other words, he is deficient in analytical power. The charge seems inadmissible, in so far as it is one which can with justice be brought against any dramatist. Within the limits of his action Jonson appears to me to *account for* his characters as well as to exhibit them in operation. I am not aware why a dramatist should be asked to 'dig deeper back' than this. What I ask from a play is that its course should enable me to understand the real nature as well as to notice the external features of any character that interests me in it; the 'genesis,' as the phrase is, of such a character I am content to divine. But Jonson's usage, in which he certainly indulged to an unwarrantable extent, of describing his personages by the mouths of other personages in the play, —his fondness for furnishing a sort of Theophrastic chorus for the hearer's better guidance,—may have misled critics to neglect the characters themselves for these characters of the characters. The best-drawn of them at all events we are able to understand through themselves; and to understand a character is to recognise it as true to nature. If it can be traced home to that fountain-head, and if the circumstances which affect its developement act upon it in consonance with its real 'humour,' all has been done which can be done by dramatic characterisation.

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[1] See on this head the remarks of Taine.

His dramatic reproduction of manners.

Lastly, in his marvellously vivid reproduction of manners—in other words, of the passing colours and shades which time and scene throw over the perennial types of humanity—Jonson is unsurpassed, if indeed he is rivalled, by any of his contemporaries. The age lives in his men and women, his country gulls and town gulls, his impostors and skeldring captains, his court ladies and would-be court ladies, his puling poetasters and whining Puritans, and above all in the whole ragamuffin rout of his *Bartholomew Fair*. The pastimes of his age both fashionable and unfashionable, its games at vapours and jeering, its high-polite courtships and its puppet-shows, its degrading superstitions and astounding hallucinations, its clubs of naughty ladies and its offices of lying news, its taverns and its tobacco-shops, its giddy heights and its meanest depths—all are brought before us by this single author[1]. And yet it is but rarely that he fails to subordinate his power of picturesque and life-like description to his greater power of realising the characters brought out by these backgrounds, illustrated by these cross-lights, and unfolded with the aid of these accidents.

His pervading consciousness.

The consciousness of his aims, and of the degree in which he approaches them, pervades the comedies of Ben Jonson to far too great an extent to allow of a fresh and undisturbed enjoyment even of his master-pieces. We here feel unmistakeably that something is lacking—that there is some drawback to the pleasure derived from perfect art. Probably Dryden, in a very notable criticism of Ben Jonson, was not far wrong in desiderating in him that easy grace and urbanity of style which in Dryden's day were—

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[1] Jonson recognised that the manners which a comic dramatist will find best are those of which he has the fullest experience. The scene of *Every Man in his Humour*, originally laid near Florence, was afterwards transferred by the author to London, and English were substituted for the Italian names of the *dramatis personae*.

nor perhaps unjustly—regarded as inseparable from 'wit [1].' As is said to have been his wont in his personal intercourse with his fellows, so as a writer he remains an observer rather than a companion; when he rouses himself, it is with something of an effort; and thus he fails to exercise upon his audience the last, though it be the least definable, charm [2]. He was for ever trying to set himself right with a public whose affection or goodwill other dramatists—greater than he or inferior to him—have been able to assume as a matter of course. And his devices of inductions and commentatory intermezzos, occasionally effective by the excellence of their execution, are on the whole to be regretted as interfering with the effect of his dramatic creations themselves, and as introducing a didactic element into an atmosphere ill-suited to it. This endeavour to revive the relations between author and public which the old Athenian comedy permitted at a single point in its dramatic mechanism—the *parabasis*—would in any case have been hazardous; but when, as in Jonson's comedies, it is made with the intention, not so much of setting the poet right with his hearers, as of forcing upon them his views of Art, it wearies the reader almost as surely as it seems at times to have offended the contemporary audience. Yet notwithstanding the opinion to the contrary of a critic who was himself an original genius, I should hesitate before drawing from this eagerness on Jonson's part to argue matters out with the public any positive conclusions in regard to the question whether or not he was 'a genius, a creative power [3].' Shakspere indeed was free from any such tendency—but though

not irreconcileable with creative power.

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[1] See the *Preface* to *An Evening's Love, or The Mock Astrologer* (Scott's Dryden, vol. iii), where, after observing that there is in Jonson 'so little of love and wit.' Dryden continues: 'I would have the characters well chosen, and kept distinct from interfering with each other; which is more than Fletcher and Shakespeare did. But I would have more of the *urbana, salsa, faceta*, and the rest which Quintilian reckons up as the ornaments of wit; and these are extremely wanting in Ben Jonson.'

[2] 'His parts,' says Fuller, 'were not so *ready* to *run of themselves, as able to answer the spur;* so that it may truly be said of him, that he had an *elaborate* wit brought out by his own industry. He would sit silent in learned company, and suck in (besides *wine*) their several humours into his observation. What was *ore* in others, he was able to refine to himself.'

[3] See Coleridge, *Literary Remains*, ii. 273.

they exhibited it in a different and in a less marked way than Jonson, is it not traceable in some of the foremost of our poets—in Dryden and in Byron—is it not to be found even in Milton? I am not comparing Jonson to any of these, but if the test is to be considered decisive in his case, its applicability to that of others should likewise be considered.

Conclusion.

In conclusion, it may not be easy to arrive at a correct estimate of the rank to be assigned in our literature to Ben Jonson—'the sundry postures of whose copious Muse[1]' seem alternately to invite deep admiration and to defy impartial criticism. But leaving aside those works which attest the exuberance of his inventive powers and the versatility of his gifts of expression rather than dramatic qualities of the highest order—leaving aside too as *sui generis* the charming fragment of *The Sad Shepherd*, far too original in manner and treatment to be regarded as a mere imitation—the following summary may seem justified. The loftiness of Jonson's purpose as a dramatist and the sturdy resolution with which he pursued it are not to be confounded with self-delusion and perversity. He was the most, as Shakspere seems to have been the least, self-conscious of the Elisabethans; but of the ideals at which he aimed, that to which he devoted the most arduous labour, and which was at the same time the most congenial to his natural gifts—the creation of a true modern comedy of the highest type—he was not far from reaching. But he was no child of fancy—he had to put on his learned sock whenever he came forth upon the stage from among his loved books; and it was his fate, as it is his glory, that his career as a dramatist was a severe and long-sustained endeavour. The meed of fame for which he so manfully strove shall assuredly not be denied him—least of all by those who know that there is a grain of truth in the definition of genius as 'an infinite capacity for taking pains.' He wished, he says in one of his poems, for 'a legitimate fame'; and at the hands of those to whom in his works as in his life he seems peculiarly to appeal, this is the fame which will I think fall to his lot.

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[1] Waller.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LATER ELISABETHANS.

Contents of this Chapter.

UNDER the above heading the present chapter will furnish some observations on the most remarkable among the dramatists whose activity as such began in the closing period of Queen Elisabeth's reign, and was thus to some extent contemporary both with Shakspere's maturity and with Ben Jonson's prime.

George Chapman (1559 *c.*–1634).

Among these dramatists the place of honour belongs by something more than the prerogative of age to GEORGE CHAPMAN[1], whose name is an illustrious one in the history of English poetic literature. It is difficult to say whether on the whole Chapman's reputation as a dramatist has gained or lost from his renown as the poetic translator of Homer. In his own day the glory reflecting from what such of his contemporaries as pretended to taste and judgment accounted the highest kind of poetical achievement, although as it would seem failing to secure him against neglect, raised his literary reputation to a height unattained perhaps by any of his fellow-dramatists except Jonson[2].

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[1] In Mr. R. H. Shepherd's edition of the *Works* of Chapman, 3 vols. 1874–5, one volume contains the plays; to the third, which contains the miscellaneous works, is prefixed the interesting essay on the poet, also published separately in 1875 by Mr. Swinburne.—A literal reprint from the old copies of the plays was issued in 1873, in 3 vols., under the title of *The Comedies and Tragedies of George Chapman, with Notes and a Memoir.*—For Chapman's biography, cf. Mr. A. H. Bullen's notice of him in vol. x of *The Dictionary of National Biography* (1887); as to the sources of his plays, E. Koeppel, *Quellenstudien zu den Dramen Chapman's, Massinger's und Ford's* (Strassburg, 1897).—A well-written, but by no means exhaustive essay, *Chapman in seinem Verhältniss zu Shakespeare*, was contributed by F. Bodenstedt to *Jahrbuch*, vol. i (1865).

[2] Too much importance need not, perhaps, be attached to the expression

Nowadays, while few writers are wont to excel equally in species of composition so widely apart from one another as those essayed by Chapman, there are on the other hand not many critics ready to acknowledge varied excellence in the same writer, even where it exists; for criticism is not less under the influence of its times than productive art. It neither, however, follows that Chapman was eminent as a dramatist because he was eminent as an epic translator, nor that he was incapable of greatness in one branch of the poetic art because he was so distinguished in another. In such a case a candid judgment will be especially on its guard to

> 'Avoid extremes, and shun the fault of such
> Who still are pleas'd too little or too much';

and perhaps the time has arrived for judging Chapman fairly as a dramatist, now that something like a definite balance may be said to have been established between the merits and the shortcomings of his translation of Homer.

His life and literary labours.

'Georgius Chapmannus Homeri metaphrastes,' as he is called in the legend of a portrait prefixed to the edition of the *Whole Works of Homer* issued by him in 1616, was, according to the statement there made as to his age, born about 1559,—according to Wood, in 1557. His birthplace seems to have been near Hitchin in Hertfordshire, where he lived for some time[1]. He is stated to have passed two years at Trinity College, Oxford, 'with a contempt,' says Warton, 'of philosophy[2],' but in close attention to the Greek and Roman classics.' He is supposed to have completed his studies at Cambridge. It is probable that he

'Father of our English Poets' applied to Chapman by John Davies of Hereford. Ben Jonson's patriarchal position was acknowledged in similar phraseology, and he in his turn saluted an epigrammatist whose general reputation as a poet may be said to be extinct, as 'Father Hoskyns.'

[1] See *Memoir*, pp. vi–vii. In his poem of *Euthymiae Raptus, or, The Teares of Peace*, the spirit of Homer recalls his visits to him in his

> 'native air; and on the hill
> Next Hitchin's left hand';

and William Browne in his *Britannia's Pastorals* refers to him under the periphrasis of 'the learned Shepheard of faire Hitching hill.'

[2] Wood had said the same thing: but it may be only an *a posteriori* conclusion. At the same time, Chapman's *Caesar and Pompey* seems to indicate that he had at some time studied metaphysics.

afterwards travelled, and the intimate acquaintance with the German language as well as the familiarity with German manners and usages exhibited in one of the plays usually accepted as his have naturally enough been made the basis of a conjecture that he passed several years in Germany [1]. Some fifteen years of his life remain otherwise unaccounted for, except that on the strength of a passage in his earliest printed work he has been thought to have possibly taken part in one or more of Sir Francis Vere's earlier campaigns in the Low Countries.

Chapman's first extant publication—consisting of two hymns under the title (to which the Greek equivalent was characteristically prefixed) of *The Shadow of Night*—bears the date of 1594. His earliest extant play, *The Blind Beggar of Alexandria*, was produced on February 12, 1596 [2], and printed two years later, by which time he was already held in high esteem as a writer for the stage. For he is mentioned with praise both as a tragic and as a comic writer in Meres' *Palladis Tamia* (1598). Possibly, he had begun his dramatic labours with an earlier piece, if Mr. Fleay's supposition be accepted that Chapman's comedy of *May Day* was founded on an earlier piece by him called *The Disguises*, mentioned by Henslowe as a new play under the date of October 2, 1595 [3]. His name occurs repeatedly in the *Diary* in 1598 and 1599, and he produced at least two further plays in those years; but he seems then to have brought nothing more on the stage till 1606. This was doubtless due to the fact that he was occupied with his Homeric translations. Of these the first instalment, consisting of seven books of the '*Iliades*,' was published in

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[1] See Elze's Introduction to *Alphonsus Emperor of Germany*, p. 31 of the edition of the play cited below. (As to the doubts thrown by Mr. Fleay upon Chapman's authorship of the play, see *ib.*) Elze, however, himself prefers the supposition that the German element in *Alphonsus* was the result of Chapman's having associated with the retinue of the Elector Palatine, who arrived in London in 1612; and points out that the masque written for the marriage of Frederick and Elisabeth is devoid of the slightest allusion to Germany.

[2] See *Henslowe's Diary*, p. 64.

[3] *Ib.*, p. 57. The title would suit *The Beggar of Alexandria* itself, but this is also mentioned by Henslowe as a new play.

1598, the remainder at different periods up to 1616, when *The Whole Works of Homer, Prince of Poets, in his Iliads and Odysses* appeared with the portrait of the translator, and with verses to the memory of Henry Prince of Wales, to whom the twelve books of the *Iliad* first published had been dedicated.

His Homer.

On the qualities of Chapman's *Homer*, which can never be deprived of the place which it conquered for itself in our poetic literature, this is not the place to enlarge. It was not only, as Mr. Swinburne expresses it, 'the sovereign labour of his life'; but it bears from first to last the impress of a genius worthy even of the great task which the English poet set himself and carried through with indomitable devotion. As a translation proper it inevitably suffered from the influence of later schools of poetry, as well as from its own undeniable defects in the way of scholarly accuracy. But the neglect which befell Chapman's *Homer* by reason of the success of the version by Pope and his coadjutors, produced the reaction in its favour represented by Charles Lamb, Coleridge and Keats. They judged it, again to quote Mr. Swinburne, by the standard of original work rather than of pure translation,—not that this latter is the criterion by which 'Pope's Homer' itself can claim to stand or fall. Of more recent critics, none worthy of the name has refused to Chapman's *Homer* the praise due to its vigour and passion, qualities without which Homer can never be fitly reproduced. But it is equally true that Chapman's style has characteristics which are partly proper to himself, partly shared by him with the literary age to which he belonged; and that these characteristics are entirely foreign to other Homeric qualities,—above all to those of simplicity and directness[1]. It should not be overlooked, in connexion with what will be observed below as to the versification of Chapman, that the metre of his *Homer* is not blank-verse, but in the case of the *Iliad* a rimed fourteen-syllable metre, with seven accents, and in the case of the *Odyssey*, rimed ten-syllable couplets.

Other translations.

His remaining non-dramatic works include poetic translations of—to use his own titulature—'the Georgicks of Hesiod,' and of the Fifth Satire of Juvenal. His continuation of Marlowe's beautiful paraphrase of the *Hero and Leander* attributed to Musaeus,—an attempt which, notwithstanding the shortcomings and incongruities involved in the making of it, cannot be dismissed as either generally ineffective or unadorned by many beauties of its own,—was printed in 1598, five years after Marlowe's death.

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[1] See Matthew Arnold's *Lectures on Translating Homer*, pp. 22-9.

His theatrical experiences.

Chapman's return to the stage, which took place in 1605[1], led to a striking incident in his life and, inasmuch as it might have affected the fortunes of the three dramatists of distinction, in the annals of the contemporary stage. It has been already mentioned[2], how on account of certain passages in the comedy of *Eastward Hoe* (produced in 1605) which he had written conjointly with Marston and Jonson (though Jonson had no share in the passages objected to), he and Marston were imprisoned; whereupon Jonson voluntarily joined them in their confinement. The release of the poets was doubtless in part attributable to the favour which Chapman seems to have enjoyed with the Court. Of his gratitude or loyalty he subsequently gave more than one sign. In 1612 he produced a masque for the marriage of the Princess Elisabeth; while to her brother Henry he dedicated tributes of regard both before and after his premature death[3]. He had other patrons of high rank, to one of whom (Somerset) he did doubtful service by celebrating his ill-omened marriage with the divorced Lady Essex in a poem too allegorically named[4], but to whom he remained faithful even after his downfall. And indeed, Chapman seems to have been no flatterer of power or servant of opportunity. Several passages in his plays attest a candour and an uprightness on questions lying at the root of the politics of his times creditable to his character as well as to his insight. In the case of his play of *Byron's Conspiracy* he showed an indiscretion hardly to be attributed to higher motives than a desire to utilise the scandal of his day, but on this occasion he escaped personal arrest[1].

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[1] Mr. Bullen inclines to think that Chapman's hand is visible in the comedy of *Sir Gyles Goosecappe*, produced anonymously in 1601 and printed in 1606, or that at all events it was written in close imitation of his manner. Mr. Fleay (though less assertively than is his wont) comes to much the same conclusion (*English Drama*, vol. ii. pp. 322-3), and traces features of resemblance to Chapman in the comic as well as in the serious scenes, where Mr. Bullen had already noticed them. See the reprint of this piece in vol. iii of Mr. Bullen's *Old English Plays* (1884).

[2] *Ante*, pp. 311 *seqq.*

[3] On his death Chapman wrote *An Epicede, or Funerall Song.*

[4] *Andromeda Liberata.*

Close of his life.

No other data remain as to Chapman's career except his publications, which to the end were not confined to writings for the stage, and included at least one production inspired by patriotic sentiment[2]. The last work, however, published with his name in his life-time was the tragedy of *Caesar and Pompey*, not known to have been acted and perhaps the revision of an earlier play. His old age seems to have been one of a tranquil and respected, but not prosperous, retirement. In 1634 he died, nearly eighty years of age, and was buried in the churchyard of St. Giles'-in-the-Fields 'near' London, where his friend Inigo Jones erected a monument over his grave.

His personal reputation and character.

In Chapman scholarship appears to have exerted its best traditional influences, instead of its wine being turned to vinegar by any infusion of vanity or jealousy. He seems to have been esteemed by patrons of the highest rank and eminence—Bacon was one of their number—and to have enjoyed in an exceptional degree the good-will of his fellow-poets. Jonson 'loved' Chapman, knew a piece of his *Iliads* by heart, and averred that, next himself, 'only Fletcher and Chapman could make a masque[3].' Marston and Shirley were associated with him as playwrights. Webster speaks of him with what may be described as an excess of enthusiasm: for he seems to place him at the head of contemporary dramatists[1]. This general esteem, in which the younger growth of lovers of letters seems to have shared, was probably due to the dignity of Chapman's character as well as to the reputation which his learning and talents had secured to him. 'He was,' says Wood, 'a person of most reverend aspect, religious and temperate, qualities rarely meeting in a poet.' In the dramatic works which I now proceed to review, the qualities which are said to have caused him to be personally honoured and beloved seem to find a faithful reflexion. Their tone is throughout in keeping with the character of a sober self-contained scholar, and with a conduct of life which like them seems to have aimed at and maintained, in Webster's words, a 'full and heightened style.'

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[1] See Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. i. p. 63, citing a despatch quoted by Raumer.

[2] These are the 'earnest and fervent verses,' as Mr. Swinburne calls them, which plead for reinforcements to Sir Horace Vere when shut up in Mannheim with his handful of English volunteers (1622). Since this poem was dedicated to the fallen Somerset, it was certainly not written to conciliate Court favour, of which indeed there was no longer much to spare for the Palsgrave and his cause. Chapman was consistent in his enthusiasm for the Protestant interest.

[3] *Conversations.* The conjecture that the character of Virgil in *The Poetaster* is intended for Chapman has been noticed, *ante*, p. 360, *note*.

Chapman's Tragedies: Bussy d'Ambois (pr. 1607) and The Revenge of Bussy d'Ambois (pr. 1613).

Among Chapman's plays, signal importance has always been justly attached to the two tragedies of *Bussy d'Ambois* and *The Revenge of Bussy d'Ambois*, as furnishing evidence of his highest powers as a tragic dramatist; and the former of them undoubtedly attained to a popularity beyond that reached by any other of its author's productions. Editions of it were printed in 1607 and 1608, and after Chapman's death in 1641 and 1657; and the appearance of *The Revenge* in 1613 was doubtless due to the reception of its predecessor. The two plays however differ in some respects from one another as to treatment, and, although connected in subject, are not to be regarded as a tragedy in two parts, hardly even in the sense in which such a description might be applied to *The First Part of Jeronimo* and *The Spanish Tragedy*.

The subjects of both these plays have usually been supposed to have been taken from Thuanus' (de Thou's) *Historiae sui temporis*; but the portion of this work containing the passages of which Chapman might have made use for the earlier tragedy was not printed till 1609, two years after the first publication of the play[2]; and nothing in the subject of the later tragedy could have been suggested by them but the starting-point of the action. In Thuanus Chapman could in no case have found anything of importance for his purpose except the character of Bussy d'Ambois, whom the historian describes as noted for his extraordinary insolence of speech; together with the statement that de Chambes Count of Monsoreau (the Montsurry of the play) killed Bussy for seducing his wife, and the further statement that a feud followed between Monsoreau and the slain man's brother-in-law John Monluc Baligny, whose wife urged him on to an unforgiving hostility, but that the quarrel, after enduring for nearly nine years, was in the end compromised by order of the King. No other source however is discoverable for the earlier tragedy[1]: Clermont d'Aubois, the brother of Bussy, upon whom in *The Revenge* is imposed the Hamlet-like task of avenging the murder of his brother, is indeed mentioned by De Thou in a portion of his *History* printed after the production of the play, but the character was either invented by the poet, or, as has been recently shown to be probable, founded on that of Marshall Byron's friend, the Comte d'Auvergne, in the narrative of the historiographer of Henry IV, Pierre Matthieu (1605)[2].

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[1] See the well-known passage in the address *To the Reader* prefixed to *Vittoria Corombona*.

[2] See E. Koeppel, *u. s.*, p. 14.

Historical background of these plays.

The scene of these plays is laid at the Court of Henry III of France, who is himself introduced into the action, in company with his brother 'Monsieur'—Duke of Alençon, and after his elder brother's accession to the throne Duke of Anjou—and with the Duke of Guise, the famous head of the Spanish party and of the League in the French Religious Wars. An historical background is thus provided not only brimful of interest for an age to which it recalled events and personages fresh in its remembrance[3], but in itself of the most striking and peculiar kind. The government of France under Henry III can, as is well known, only be described by the word chaos; nor has any worse monarch ever dishonoured a crown. Enervated, effeminate, and unable to rouse himself to action except under the dictation of his mother or of his wretched crew of 'minions' who shared the ineffable corruption of his Court, he was a sovereign whom Catholics and Huguenots could at least agree in despising and abhorring. Of him it may be said—in words applied to his elder brother and predecessor, Charles IX, by the brilliant historian[1] who like Carlyle had the gift of exaggerating without becoming untrue—that he is a better argument against monarchy than all republican theories. Henry's younger brother, who threw away one of the noblest opportunities of popular sovereignty which has offered itself to a modern prince, and who has left the memory of his title impressed upon one of the most shameless bargains of even his times[2], was to the full as contemptible as the King himself; but France was spared the succession of the youngest of Catharine de' Medici's progeny. The personality of Guise was of a different stamp; in him, as is well known, was embodied the fanaticism of the League, and he died a martyr to a consistent ambition, while in the whole career of Henry III his death was the solitary event which became a prince.

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[1] According to Langbaine, the intrigue between Bussy and Tamyra is narrated in François de Rosset's *Histoires Tragiques de Notre Temps* (1621) under the feigned names of Lysis and Silvie.

[2] Koeppel, *u. s.*, pp. 43 *seqq.*

[3] In act i. the English Court under Elisabeth is contrasted by Guise with the French. He says of the English that they make

'of their old Queen
An ever-young and most immortal goddess.'

This turbid background well suits the action of these tragedies. But it may be worth noting that the character of Henry III is treated by the English dramatist with less severity than it seems to deserve even on the basis of the action of the second of these plays, while that of 'Monsieur' is exposed with unsparing severity. Possibly, some regard was still paid in England to the remembrance of the scheme once entertained by Elisabeth of a marriage with Henry; Alençon had indeed likewise been a suitor for her hand, but never with so protracted an expectation of success. Or it may be, that in the enemy of the Guise much seemed pardonable because of that enmity. Thus here, as in at least one other earlier drama, a certain measure of tenderness is shown towards the person of the King[3]. It would be less easy to understand why Chapman seems to have no wish to represent Guise, the supposed author of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, under an execrable aspect,—but that this dramatist shows a deeper insight into history than his fellows, and accordingly abstains as it were by instinct from painting black in black.

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[1] Michelet.

[2] 'La Paix de Monsieur' (1576).

[3] See Marlowe's *Massacre at Paris*. Cf. vol. i. p. 192.—Sir Henry Wotton in his historico-political survey of *The State of Christendom*, not

The reader might therefore have been spared the above references to the historical background of these plays, were it not that their author, without as a rule attempting any very close historical characterisation, shows himself fully aware of the true significance of the realities which cast their lurid glare across his mimic scene. A strong historical sense, if I may use the expression, is so rare in even the greatest of our Elisabethan dramatists, that it is all the more noteworthy to find Chapman thoughtfully sounding the depths of movements from the consequences of which his age was still trembling. Certain passages in these plays probe the depths of the dark waters from which France had recently emerged, and which might have taught the age of James I lessons sorely needed by it. Chapman was no political seer; but he understood the meaning of history; he perceived the real difference between despotism and the rule of law; he could tell the truth to Kings who 'strained past right, for their right [1],' and could remind freemen that 'who breaks no Law is subject to no King [2].'

Bussy d'Ambois.

This, however, is merely one of the aspects under which these tragedies have to be considered. Bussy d'Ambois, the hero of the earlier of the pair, is a vigorous child of nature, nobly-born. but with no fortune except such as his own strength of character and his sword may carve out for him. Introduced to Court by Monsieur, who intends to use him as an instrument, and by his aid to gain the throne [3],

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published till 1657. but written in 1602 or 1603 during his exile after the outbreak of Essex' conspiracy, actually enters into an elaborate apology on behalf of Henry III.

[1] See the whole of the admirable passage in *The Revenge* (act iv) beginning 'What change is here?'

[2] *Ib.*, near the close of the act.

[3] 'There is no second place in numerous State
That holds more than a Cypher.' (Act i.)

he raises himself to an independent position of power. He cares neither for the Guise nor for Monsieur, who accordingly combine to effect his ruin. This they accomplish by revealing to the Count of Montsurry the passion of Bussy for the Countess, Tamyra. Bussy has access to her chamber by a subterraneous passage known only to himself and to a Friar who has served him as guide to his paramour. The Friar is first slain, and, though his ghost appears to warn the lovers, Bussy is deluded into incredulity by the Count, who sends a letter which he has forced his miserable wife to write in her blood, and himself assumes the Friar's habit. Bussy seeks a last interview with the lady, when he is met by the husband, and although in a combat he 'hath Montsurry down,' is killed by pistol-shots fired by the hirelings of his other enemies. Montsurry seems to forgive his wife, but turns away from her for ever.

This strange plot is carried out with complete effectiveness. The character of Bussy is most vigorously—at times rather coarsely—drawn [1]; and the scene, *e.g.*, in which Monsieur requests his true opinion of his would-be patron, after encouraging him by a frank statement of his own opinion concerning Bussy himself, is written with genuine power. Tamyra is another character of passionate intensity, and her speeches contain touches of a knowledge of woman's nature in which Chapman was certainly not deficient [2].

But although some of the other characters might be dwelt upon with like praise, it is in the diction that the most noteworthy feature of this play is to be sought. Here as in *The Revenge*—but in the earlier play with least degeneration into prolixity—will be observed Chapman's love of similes and metaphors, frequently of a very original, and generally of a very felicitous, kind. His learning was very deep and very wide; but he is equally ready to associate his ideas with the phenomena of nature, and ransacks his scientific experience like an earlier George Eliot[1]. At the same time the finish and beauty of the versification are as remarkable as the vigour of the diction; and though opportunities for bombast abounded, it is only in two passages at the close of the play that I have observed any example of it.

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[1] How excellent is the simile applied to him (act i):

'D'Ambois (that like a Laurel put in fire
Sparkled and spit).'

[2] These lines are very beautiful in expression:

'Before I was secure against death and hell;
But now am subject to the heartless fear
Of every shadow, and of every breath,
And would change firmness with an aspen leaf;
So confident a spotless conscience is;
So weak a guilty.' (Act iii.)

The vehement attack of Dryden upon the style of *Bussy d'Ambois* as typical of 'dwarfish thought dressed up in gigantic words, repetition in abundance, looseness of expression, and gross hyperboles'—in a word, of bombast—accordingly seems to me not less unjust in its application to the play as a whole, than misleading as to the actual relations obtaining in it as between form and matter. 'Cinderheaps and windbags,' as Mr. Swinburne says, are indeed discoverable in the rhetorical diction of both this and other of Chapman's tragedies; but they are not to my mind characteristic of its prevailing effect. The long-lived popularity of *Bussy d'Ambois*, which for the rest Dryden by no means succeeded in destroying, goes far to account for the exaggerated tone of his invective which, as in justice to him should be remembered, was partly intended to point a recantation of his own earlier tragic manner[1]. The finish and beauty of the versification are as remarkable in this play as is the vigour of the diction.

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[1] A few examples must suffice:

'A worthy man should imitate the weather
That sings in tempests; and being clear is silent.' (Act iv.)

'The stony birth of clouds will touch no laurel,
Nor any sleeper.' (Act v.)

'The errant wilderness of a woman's face:
Where men cannot get out, for all the Comets
That have been lighted at it; though they know
That adders lie a sunning in their smiles,' &c. (Act v);

and the odd simile of the candle at the close of the play. So again in *The Revenge*, the simile of the rainbow (act ii), and this passage (act i), which reads like a paraphrased opening of a chapter of *Middlemarch*:

'But as geometricians . . .
Teach that no lines, nor superficies
Do move themselves, but still accompany
The motions of their bodies: so poor wives
Must not pursue, nor have their own affections
But to their husbands' earnests,' &c.

The Revenge of Bussy d'Ambois.

In *The Revenge*, the conception of the main character leads the author to a constant indulgence in passages of reflexion, where rhetoric more largely gets the better of poetry. Bussy's brother Clermont is the hero of the play—a character totally different from that of the elder brother[2]. He is a 'Senecal man,' a philosopher who contemns the minions by whom he is surrounded. Yet he is not the less brave because he can 'contain' his 'fire, as hid in embers.' He adheres with loyal fidelity to his patron Guise, after whose death he commits suicide in the spirit of a true Stoic. His wisdom he illustrates abundantly by paradoxical reflexions of his own, as well as by quotations from the ancients—Sophocles in particular, whose *Antigone* he seems to have read to good purpose[3]. The action of the piece is indicated by its title. Bussy's brother-in-law, the mean-spirited Baligny, is in vain urged by his wife to avenge her brother's death, which Tamyra also, Montsurry's wife, has not forgotten. Instead of doing his duty, Baligny persuades the King to order the apprehension of Clermont as a friend of Guise; and the proceedings by which this scheme is accomplished are extended to a rather wearisome length. On his release Clermont is himself urged to perform the deed by the ghost of Bussy; and in a powerfully-written scene he engages Montsurry in single combat, his sister appearing in disguise to take his place should it prove requisite. Meanwhile Guise has been murdered; Monsieur has died; and thus a whole array of ghosts (including that of 'Shattilin' in memory of the St. Bartholomew) are introduced before the close, which is brought about by Clermont's suicide. Thus the construction of *The Revenge* is not of a very symmetrical character; and the merits of this play are, more exclusively than those of the earlier tragedy, excellences of detail. Notwithstanding the eloquent philosophy of Clermont, the earlier of these two remarkable tragedies undoubtedly deserves to be preferred to its successor. In the Preface to *The Revenge* 'material instruction, elegant and sententious excitation to Virtue, and deflexion from her contrary' are described by Chapman as 'the soul, limbs and limits of an authentical tragedy'; and with such lofty aims as these in view, he certainly produced two works of singular power, and in parts of high poetic merit.

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[1] See the *Epistle Dedicatory* to *The Spanish Fryar* (1681), where Dryden says that like a famous modern poet (Strada) who used to sacrifice every year a Statius to Vergil's manes, he has 'indignation enough to burn a *d'Ambois* annually, to the memory of Jonson,' but adds that he remembers some verses of his own Maximin and Almansor, which he 'wishes heartily in the same fire with Statius and Chapman.' Oldham, in his *Horace's Art of Poetry Imitated in English* (also printed in 1681), similarly speaks of the time

> 'When *Bussy d'Amboise* and his Fustian took
> And often were ravish'd with Queen *Gorborduc*.'

Pope, in the Preface to his *Iliad*, rather maliciously declares that Chapman in his *Homer* shows himself guilty of an 'expression involved in fustian, a fault for which he was remarkable in his original writings, as in the tragedy of *Bussy d'Amboix*, &c.' Even D'Urfey, who in 1691 revised the play with certain alterations which Genest, vol. ii. p. 10, describes as improvements, speaks of its 'intolerable Fustian.' The actor (Mountford) who performed the part of the hero was applauded notwithstanding its association with the memory of Hart (recently deceased) and of Field before him.

[2] They are well contrasted by a scene corresponding to that in which Monsieur had sought Bussy's genuine opinion of himself. Clermont is asked the same question; and manages to convey the same answer, but after a very different fashion.

[3] Act ii. The interesting passage (act i) on the respect due to the stage, when pursuing its true ends, should be noticed, although, as Clermont's interlocutor observes, it be only a 'virtuous digression.'

The Conspiracy and The Tragedy of Byron (*pr.* 1608).

Unlike the two preceding plays, *The Conspiracie* and *The Tragedie of Charles Duke of Byron, Marshall of France* (printed 1608), may be regarded as a pair forming a single whole. Their subject possesses an interest far superior to that of Bussy d'Ambois; and the event which forms their catastrophe being fresh within men's memories—the execution of Biron took place in 1602—the plays could hardly fail to attract much attention[1]. Henry IV of France was still reigning when they were produced, so that they are among the few extant Elisabethan dramas relating to more or less contemporary historical events.

It has already been mentioned that Chapman showed much indiscretion in the choice of some of the incidents which in *The Conspiracie* he caused to be presented upon the stage. Besides bringing Queen Elisabeth in person, as it would seem, upon the boards, and giving offence to the French ambassador by introducing on them, under however favourable a light, his royal master—in defiance of the ordinance prohibiting the representation on the stage of any 'modern Christian king[1]'—he connived at the performance of the play after the Court had left London, and at the inclusion in it of a scene in which the Queen of France rated her consort's mistress and finally administered to her a box on the ear[2].

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[1] They seem alluded to in Dekker's *Northward Hoe*, act iv.

The conspiracy of Biron, and his sovereign's behaviour towards the culprit, form one of the most striking episodes in the reign of the good King Henry. 'Many,' says Langbaine, 'are the authors that have mention'd the Marshal's story[3]'; and there are indications that English playwrights busied themselves with it very soon after the occurrence of its catastrophe[4]. De Thou's narrative of the events reproduced by Chapman is admirable in itself[5], but cannot have been used by the English dramatist, as it was not published

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[1] Cf. the remarks in connexion with Middleton's *Game of Chess*, below.

[2] This scene was of course omitted from the printed copy.

[3] *Account*, &c., p. 61.

[4] See Fleay, *u.s.*, p. 64.

[5] De Thou's account of the King's attempt to make the haughty Marshal confess his guilt, and thus to obtain an opportunity of exercising mercy, bears a certain resemblance to Seneca's celebrated story of the interview between Augustus and Cinna, dramatised with so perennial an effect by Corneille. But the result was in fact a directly contrary one in the case of Biron, who unlike Cinna refused to confess, so that the generous prince was unable to save him from his doom. De Thou likewise gives the anecdote of Queen Elisabeth's warning to Biron at the time of his English embassy; and his brief relation is far more dramatic than the long narrative in the *Conspiracy* as printed (occupying an entire act of the play), where Chapman reproduces the dialogues held with Biron at the English Court. (See act iv, for the report given by Crequi to d'Aumont of the Marshal's English embassy.) Here, though a long speech by Queen Elisabeth is recited by the narrator, the warning proceeds not from her, but from

'a Counsellor
Of great and eminent name, and matchless merit,'—

not otherwise identified. In De Thou the Queen also points out to Biron in the Tower 'Essexii caput,' and expresses the opinion that King Henry IV would do well to adopt the same wholesome way of demonstrating the results of treason. She begs Biron to recommend to his master not to be too merciful, and adds 'Quantum ad me attinet, nunquam misericordiâ till 1620, thirteen years after its author's death. The main source of the play must accordingly be looked for elsewhere; and it has by recent research[1] been traced to the narrative by Pierre Matthieu of the seven years of the reign of Henry IV following upon the Peace of Vervins (1598). In the *Tragedy* he appears to have followed this authority with even more persistency and closeness, treating his text much as Shakspere treated Plutarch, with a mixture of freedom and fidelity, as they respectively suited his dramatic purpose, but not hesitating to become a mere poetic translator where this served his turn. He likewise made use of P. V. de Cayet's account of the same period, printed in 1605, and of the celebrated *Inventaire Général de l'Histoire de France,* by J. de Serres, which first appeared in 1597. Pierre Matthieu seems even to have furnished hints which led Chapman to have included in the play as originally produced the Chriemhild-Brunhild scene *à la Renaissance*—with a supplementary Elisabethan *soufflet* due to his own invention—which in the printed version is veiled by an allegorical narrative somewhat lacking in lightness[2].

The historical narrative of the fall of Biron is expanded by Chapman into two dramas possessed of many merits, and so far as literary execution is concerned to be perhaps ranked above any other of their author's writings for the stage[3], but unmistakeably, as it seems to me, inferior in dramatic vigour and effectiveness to the two *Bussy d'Ambois* plays. The action hardly contains enough of progressive

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eorum tangar, qui pacem publicam conturbant.' The circumstances of the execution of Biron are also told at length by De Thou.

[1] See E. Koeppel, *u. s.*, pp. 16 *seqq.*

[2] See *The Tragedy of Byron,* act i. sc. 1, which, significantly of the omission made by authority, closes with 'End of Act ii.'—In his essay *Zur Quellenkunde des Stuart-Dramas* (Brunswick, 1896), reprinted from *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen,* vol. xcvii, Dr. Koeppel traces the plot of the play printed in 1634 under the title of *The Noble Souldier, or, A Contract Broken justly Reveng'd,* by S. R. (supposed to be Samuel Rowley), and reprinted in vol. i of Mr. Bullen's *Old English Plays* (1882), to the historical account of Henry IV's promise of marriage to the Marquise de Verneuil, the heroine of the suppressed episode in the *Tragedy of Byron*—although the scene of the play is laid in Spain, its running title being *The Noble Spanish Souldier.*

[3] See the striking criticism of Mr. Swinburne, *u. s.*, pp. 92 *seqq.*

interest to warrant its being spread over two Parts; nor is the figure of the hero so commanding as to justify the width of the canvas. The one note of his character is overbearing arrogance; nor is there any essential variation in the display of this quality till near the close, when, with some dramatic force, the bearing of the doomed and baffled schemer is made to teach the truth that

> 'Strength to aspire is still accompanied
> With weakness to endure[1].'

No genuine sympathy can be felt for so continuous an exhibition of self-esteem; and—as was under the circumstances unavoidable—the 'glorious' Marshal's exaltation of his own merits occasionally breaks forth into downright rant. Little power of characterisation is displayed in the other personages of these plays. The easy and self-controlled dignity of the King is, however, very pleasingly and successfully depicted, while in the *Conspiracy* there is vigour as well as vivacity in the character of the politic Duke of Savoy, who first involves the hero in the meshes of treasonable intrigue. The villainous Lafin, whose double treachery finally ruins the Marshal, is a commonplace intriguer; and we meet with no other character of interest. Some of the scenes are effective — thus, in particular, that with the astrologer, from whom the eager enquirer cannot bear to hear a truthful forecast of his fate[2], his interview with the King at the close of the earlier play, and the final scene of the *Tragedy*. But the chief merits of the work lie in its general strength of style, and in individual passages, rather than in the general conduct of its dramatic action.

These works furnished Chapman with opportunities for a full display of his epical and rhetorical powers, which are alike of a very high order. But narrative passages (such as those in the scene between Savoy and the King in act ii. of the *Conspiracy*), and admirably written speeches of great length (such as those of Cupid in the masque in act i. of the *Tragedy*, for the introduction of which special circumstances account, and those in act iv. of the *Conspiracy* already referred to), are apt without the most careful management fatally to clog dramatic action. Chapman however seems to have determined to spare neither the breath of his actors nor the patience of his hearers; and grows more and more lengthy as the action proceeds, until we finally find set forth (as the Chancellor says, for 'shortnesse sake') the five principal charges against the Marshal and his five answers. Thus 'a liberal sufferance of' the author's 'speech' becomes at times barely possible.

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[1] *Tragedy*, act iv, *ad fin.* 'Never,' says the Chancellor, 'saw I man of such a spirit so *amaz'd* at death.'

[2] *Conspiracy*, act iii.

Ingenious and often most felicitous similes and metaphors of the kind already noticed in *Bussy d'Ambois* again abound, exhibiting, it must be allowed, too much of what King Henry humorously calls (in Savoy)

> 'wit of the true Pierian spring
> That can make any thing of any thing[1].'

And the author appears too anxious to introduce illustrations of his own learning, which is indeed sufficiently various to be instructive even to the modern reader, but which better suits the lips of Elisabeth and her councillors than on those of the plain-spoken Henry and his Court. The fluent grace of the versification remains however unaffected by any of these elaborate efforts; and nowhere has the author's muse risen to passages of a truer poetic beauty[2].

Caesar and Pompey (*pr.* 1631).

Caesar and Pompey was not printed till 1631; but from the dedication to the Earl of Middlesex, a statesman whose career was no signal exemplification of Roman virtue, it appears that the play had been written 'long since,' and was never acted. It announces itself as a Roman tragedy, and out of the events represented therein is said to be 'evicted this Proposition, *Only a just man is a freeman.*' This maxim—no common-place in Chapman's mouth, for he had a true understanding, nourished by his classical lore, of the real dignity of free civic life—finds its actual embodiment in Cato, with whose death the play closes. The last act, both as developing Cato's philosophy and as exhibiting with some dramatic force the anxieties of Pompey's wife Cornelia and her fleeting recovery of the husband whom she is to lose for ever, seems to me superior in execution to the rest of the play[1], which shows much unevenness in the treatment of its theme. It begins with so free a handling of historical facts, as to introduce a hot debate in the Senate between Caesar and Pompey on the eve of the outbreak of civil war; then follows the tragi-comic episode of Fronto and Ophioneus, due to the dramatist's own invention; and after this we pass, with a long narrative by a *Nuntius*, into an action which closely follows Plutarch to the end[2]. Although, however, Chapman probably had recourse to other authorities besides Plutarch, the display of classical learning is far slighter than might have been expected[3]; but while this self-restraint is the reverse of unwelcome, the looseness of the construction of this tragedy, which is epical rather than dramatic, and the absence (unless in the exceptional case of the desperado Fronto) of any attempt at characterisation, leave it devoid of dramatic interest. It can hardly be accounted a powerful thought to make Caesar decide to fight the battle of Pharsalus only because of the good omens which he has received [1]. Indeed the view of Caesar as a 'fortunate' man is throughout too persistently pressed, when in truth it was his rival who before the closing part of his career was so pre-eminently a debtor to good-luck. Remarkable in the main neither for historic insight, nor for commanding power of style, and not on the level of its author's best works even in beauty of versification, *Caesar and Pompey* must have been created by Chapman's genius when in a tame mood, and was probably never subjected by him to a thorough revision [2].

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[1] *Conspiracy*, act ii. Thus, a simile (*Conspiracy*, act iii), beginning with a fine poetic image, is, in order to give the idea an artificial completeness, made part of a painfully clever conceit. and Biron says of himself and the King:

> 'My spirit as yet, but stooping to his rest,
> Shines hotly in him, *as the Sun in clouds,*
> *Purpled, and made proud with a peaceful Even:*
> But when I throughly set to him, his cheeks
> Will (like those clouds) forego their colour quite,
> And his whole blaze smoke into endless night.'

[2] *e.g.* Biron's speech (near the end of the *Conspiracy*) beginning
'O innocence, the sacred amulet.'

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[1] Act v. plays partly at Utica, partly at Lesbos—

'compass'd in
With the Aegean sea, that doth divide
Europe from Asia,—the sweet literate world
From the barbarian.'

Here, in a highly effective scene, Cornelia and her attendants await the coming of Pompey as victor, and fail to recognise him, when he actually arrives with a single friend, disguised in black robe and broad hat—like a Puritanical lecturer rather than a 'Thessalian augur.'—I see no reason for supposing that Addison, when he wrote his *Cato*, was acquainted with Chapman's play.

[2] Cf. Koeppel, *Quellenstudien zu den Dramen Chapman's &c.*, pp. 67 *seqq.* —The Senate-scene of act i has some vigour. By a rather bold anachronism, part of the debate as to the fate of the Catilinarian conspirators is here introduced.—The episode of Fronto, a ruined rascal and himself what would be called at Berlin 'a Catilinarian entity,' who summons up Ophioneus (a classical Lucifer or devil-serpent, *vide* his obliging reference, for further information concerning himself, to 'the old stoic Pherecides'), must be concluded to be Chapman's own invention; it leads to nothing.

[3] The diction is on the whole free from anachronisms; although such

Alphonsus Emperor of Germany (*pr.* 1654).

Two other tragedies which are usually included among Chapman's works were not printed till twenty years after his death, when curiously enough they both appeared with his name in the same year (1654), although issued by different publishers. The tragedy named—or misnamed—*Alphonsus Emperor of Germany* was acted at the Blackfriars on May 5, 1636, in the presence of Queen Henrietta Maria and the Palsgrave Charles Lewis [3], but may of course have been the revival of an earlier play. Beyond all dispute the tragedy as we possess it exhibits very marked differences from the dramatic works which are unquestion-

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pardonable licences occur as Pompey's reference to Irish boys and Ophioneus' advice to Fronto to 'drink with the Dutchman, swear with the Frenchman, cheat with the Englishman, buy with the Scot, and turn all this to Religion.' Pompey is guilty of an ingenious misquotation (possibly due to a loose reminiscence of Lucan's famous line) in saying that he would rather err with *Cato* 'than with the truth go of the world besides.' It is by the way a curious, but far from idle, choice of phrase that Caesar should more than once be said to be aiming at the place of 'universal bishop.'

[1] The converse scene in Shakspere's *Julius Caesar* (act ii. sc. 2) is highly effective, nor can I for a moment agree with the critics who think it dramatically unworthy of a Caesar.

[2] Mr. Fleay remarks on the extreme corruptness of the text.

[3] Cf. Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. ii. p. 311, where *Alphonsus* is noticed among *Anonymous Plays*.

ably Chapman's. As Elze in his excellent edition of the play[1] observes, the familiarity shown in it both with German manners and customs (although the references to these may not be always perfectly accurate) and with the German language cannot be reconciled with Chapman's authorship of it except on one of two hypotheses. Either he had at some time of his life—conceivably in connexion with his supposed stay in the Low Countries—visited Germany and acquired a knowledge of its language; or he was assisted by a German writer in the composition of this tragedy. In view of the fact that no traces of this familiarity are to be found in any work undoubtedly Chapman's, I should with Elze incline to the latter hypothesis, and indeed should be willing to go further and to suppose it possible that a good deal of the substance of the play as well as the German passages contained in it were supplied by some German writer[2]. For not only is the dialogue in general full of German phrases, but the impression left by the entire play is suggestive of its having been revised rather than composed by Chapman. If, on the other hand, it is supposed to be his workmanship, it cannot be anything but a juvenile tragedy which he afterwards laid aside. It was in this case written before he had found his own tragic style—it must be remembered that the tragedies previously noticed were not produced till he was comparatively advanced in years—and was content to write in the rugged manner of earlier dramatists[3]. Although the last act of

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[1] Dr. Karl Elze's edition of *Alphonsus* (Leipzig, 1867) is furnished with an interesting introduction, together with some interesting notes explaining various passages in the play.

[2] One German writer at all events, who might have done such a piece of work, was resident in London from 1624 (or earlier) to a period long after Chapman's death, and wrote English as well as German verse. This was Georg Rudolf Weckherlin, who after being previously in the service of the Duke of Württemberg and in intimate relations with the Palatine house, was long employed by the English government, more especially in foreign business. Among contemporary English dramatists, Dr. Koeppel can suggest only Richard Brome as seeming to have been acquainted with German.

[3] Mr. Fleay considers the supposition of Wood and Winstanley that the author of *Alphonsus* was Peele, far more probable than the assignation of it to Chapman.

Alphonsus is generally superior to its predecessors, and although the frequency of classical allusions may be thought indicative of Chapman's authorship, it is as a whole in no respect worthy of his genius, and in truth but an indifferent piece of literary work[1].

The subject of this play is the contention between Alfonso X of Castile and Richard, Earl of Cornwall, younger brother of King Henry III, for the crown of the Holy Roman Empire, in the *Interregnum* which preceded the election of Rudolf of Halsburg. With the view of doing honour to the English prince, as well as of interesting the audience, the events and characters of the action are treated with an utter disregard of historical fact. Thus, to begin with, the real Alphonsus never came to Germany at all, and seems, so far as we know, to have done nothing at home in Castile to damage his fair fame. In the play he becomes a villain of the deepest dye. He starts with the murder of his secretary, by way of getting rid of the confidential agent of his evil policy, and then persuades the son of his victim that the deed was done by order of the Electors. This son, Alexander, is hereupon instigated by the Emperor to poison those of the Electors who are adverse to his interests. He is next induced by Alphonsus to dishonour the Saxon princess, the newly-married bride of Prince Edward, the nephew of his English rival Richard. Finally the villainous Emperor is destroyed by the instrument of his own malice. For when the battle between the rival forces has been decided in Alphonsus' favour, Alexander brings false news of defeat to the tyrant, in order to induce him to kill his wife (Richard's sister) and Prince Edward, who are in his custody. In dastardly despair, Alphonsus now reveals himself to Alexander as the real murderer of his father, and meets with the retaliation of death at the hands of the son.

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[1] Mr. Swinburne recognises in this play 'a notable capacity for vigorous theatrical manipulation of incident, which is so notably deficient in the earlier and loftier works of Chapman.' If it was in substance Chapman's own, it cannot possibly have been a production of his later days. Mr. Bullen, like the late Dr. W. Wagner—in the present instance specially qualified to pronounce an opinion—seems unable to reconcile himself to the assumption of Chapman's authorship. Professor Wülcker inclines to the belief that it was Chapman's, but a juvenile production.

This outline is far from exhausting the horrors of the play, which are intermixed with some extremely doubtful fun,—promoted by causing the Saxon princess, as well as two 'bowrs' who are suborned to assassinate Richard, to talk German.

This device, employed here for purposes more equivocal than that of producing a laugh at the sound of a foreign 'lingo,' is of course by no means peculiar to this play; but it is nowhere else carried out with the same measure of elaboration. Shakspere's Princess Katharine can only speak French; in Dekker's *Shoemakers' Holiday* the hero assumes the disguise and the tongue of a Fleming; and other instances might be cited for the introduction of a character speaking a foreign language. The peculiarity of Princess 'Hedewick's' and the 'bowrs'' German is its thoroughly idiomatic character; it is as good German as the rest of the play is English, and could hardly have been written by an Englishman who had not at some period of his life become thoroughly Germanised. On the other hand, it seems beyond the mark to suppose the author of this play to have intended it to convey any allusions to the German politics of the period of its production. The details concerning the Electoral College might, as Elze shows, easily have been taken from English books;—an English translation of the Golden Bull in particular had appeared in 1619. But if the author may be trusted to have taken no thought of chronological accuracy, and to have chiefly cared for 'local colouring' in political as well as social details—he was at least as certainly innocent of any political double-meaning. The *status* of the Empire during the *Interregnum* in truth resembled its condition at the beginning of the Thirty Years' War far too vaguely to have supplied suitable materials for such a purpose, nor can I perceive any evidence of any intention in this direction having been entertained in the present instance[1].

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[1] Dr. Elze Introduction, p. 35) made a slip in saying that the 'Palsgrave' Frederick was, like Richard of Cornwall, 'elected to the imperial dignity by dissenting parties of the States.' James's son-in-law was, of course, elected to the Bohemian, not the Imperial, crown; and the resemblance therefore

Alphonsus, notwithstanding, remains a very curious attempt to bring before English spectators a subject nominally taken from the history, and written with some real knowledge of the life, of a foreign country. There are in this tragedy, as already observed, apart from the knowledge of the German language which it displays, passages which could not have been written except by one well acquainted with German ways and manners; but these have been so well elucidated by its German editor, that I refer to his guidance those interested in this unique illustration of the intimate connexion between the two countries in the century which succeeded the Reformation period.

Revenge for Honour (*pr.* 1654).

Revenge for Honour, if by Chapman, must indubitably be reckoned among his later plays, since the character of the versification resembles Beaumont and Fletcher's in the abundance of feminine endings to the lines, and there is nothing in the choice of theme (not known to be historical) akin to his early predilections. Far removed from the baldness of *Alphonsus*, *Revenge for Honour* abounds with ingenious and graceful similes, drawn here and there, as in the tragedies known to be Chapman's, from the observation of nature[1]. Versification and diction together give a luxurious tone to this play not ill-adapted to its subject, which is that of an Oriental palace-plot. Almanzor, Caliph of Arabia, has two sons by different wives. The younger son (Abrahen), in order to effect the ruin of the elder (Abilqualit), avails himself of his brother's guilty passion for Caropia (the wife of a rough lord named Mura) whom he himself unsuccessfully loves. The elder brother is condemned to have his eyes put out for a pretended act of violence, with which the intriguing Abrahen has persuaded Caropia to charge her too eager lover, so as to save herself from her husband's wrath. Abilqualit is the favourite of the soldiers;

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dwindles into a mere analogy. As for the likeness between the secretary Lorenzo and Pater Lamormain, the features which they have in common might probably be traced in half the 'Macchiavellian' counsellors who were a standing figure of the Elisabethan stage.

[1] See especially act iv. sc. 1, 2, and act v. sc. 2. The floral similes are particularly pleasing.

and on their attempting a rescue, the wrathful Sultan bids the Mutes (who characteristically enough take a considerable share in the action) strangle their prisoner. Overcome with grief for the loss of his noble son, the Sultan is murdered by a further device of Abrahen (a poisoned handkerchief), and the ambitious schemer now sees himself at the summit of success. Caropia herself—who throughout is moved by ambition rather than by affection—hereupon accepts his suit; so that when Abilqualit reappears (for he has merely feigned death), there obviously remains no way out of the situation except to make Abrahen kill Caropia and himself, and Caropia, foiled once more in her ambition, in the moment of her own death kill Abilqualit.

This unpleasant plot and the extremely unlovely character of the heroine might seem together likely to have produced a play the reverse of attractive; but apart from the excellence of the writing, the author has invested the character of Abilqualit with true nobility, while some of the other characters are likewise well drawn. Altogether the tragedy is very much superior to *Alphonsus*, with which it has little or nothing in common but the date of its publication [1].

Comedies.

In discussing Chapman's comedies, it is necessary in the first instance to go back to the beginning of his dramatic productivity, so far as its results are preserved to us.

The Blind Beggar of Alexandria (*acted* 1596 *circ.*; *pr.* 1598).

The earliest two extant comedies of Chapman both belong to the reign of Elisabeth, and are removed a few years in date of composition from his later dramatic productions. Of these, *The Blinde Beggar of Alexandria* (printed 1598, acted about two years previously) is much inferior to its successor. Its plot is that of an outrageously improbable romance; and its hero, the Protean beggar Irus (whose assumed Homeric name will be observed [2]; his real name is Cleanthes, and he adopts a variety of aliases in order to conquer the hearts of several ladies), can hardly be regarded as an attempt at character-drawing. But already in this, the earliest of Chapman's extant plays, an occasional vein of poetic imaginativeness becomes manifest, finding expression in similes at once original and beautiful. The example of Marlowe may perhaps have suggested the daring conception of the hero's ambition; and the play contains an indication that Chapman, who in the year 1598 published his continuation of *Hero and Leander*, had been brought under the influence of its author's muse[1]. The beauty of much of the versification is already considerable.

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[1] Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. ii. p. 326, notes that the publisher of *Revenge for Honour* in the previous year (1653) entered in the Registers *The Parracide, or Revenge for Honour*, as by Henry Glapthorne, doubtless the same play as that which he printed with the name of Chapman.

[2] Koeppel, *u. s.*, p. 2, has noticed one or two other reminiscences of Greek poetry in this piece.

An Humorous Day's Mirth (pr. 1599).

The 'pleasant comedy entituled *An Humerous Dayes Myrth*' (printed 1599, but probably acted as early as 1597[2]) is well named. Its plot, which, like that of *The Blind Beggar*, seems quite original, is at the same time extremely slight in texture, consisting indeed of little more than a series of tricks played, for the sake of sport only, by a mischievous courtier called Lemot upon a doting old husband and a doting old wife. But the characters are drawn with remarkable vivacity, and the dialogue is full of wit. The influence of Lyly is perceptible in this play by the side of that of Ben Jonson, with whose *Every Man out of his Humour* it was nearly contemporaneous[3]. The foolish old husband and his Puritan wife, whose fidelity to her principles he allows to undergo a series of trials before his eyes, although out of his hearing, are in the true vein of genuine comedy: and the manners of a Puritan lady of the higher class are here evidently drawn to the life[1]. The most celebrated personage in the play, however, is the young Lord Dowsecer, whose eloquent misanthropy has a touch in it of Hamlet, although the triviality of the plot admits of no full developement of the character[2].

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[1] The line in the last scene of the play—

'None ever loved but at first sight they loved'—

is of course a plagiarism from *Hero and Leander*. The 'thumb-biting' in an earlier scene recalls a well-known passage in *Romeo and Juliet*.

[2] I see no reason against accepting the suggestion of Mr. Fleay that this was the *Comodey of Umers* mentioned by Henslowe as a new play under the date of May 11, 1597. It can hardly have been Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour* (cf. *ante*, p. 303).

[3] The repeated marked use of the word 'humour' is worth notice in this connexion. The two courtiers who are in possession of the 'complements of a gentleman' are quite in Jonson's manner; much of the dialogue is in Lyly's, but freer in form.

All Fools (*pr.* 1605).

All Fooles (printed in 1605, but known to have been completed by 1599[3]) is considerably inferior in humour of characterisation to *Eastward Hoe* (printed in the same year), but likewise deserves to be ranked as a very admirable comedy. Its intricate plot, the nature of which is suggested by its title, and which, while partly taken, as noted by Langbaine, from the *Heautontimorumenos* of Terence, bears in its general conception some resemblance to that of *Every Man out of his Humour*, is well invented and very symmetrically executed. The pair of fathers, of whom the one is deceived by means of a trick which he helps to play on his friend and neighbour, and again the jealous husband and the frivolous gallant[4], are effectively played off against one another: and with a poetic justice not always observable in the comic drama, the disreputable Rinaldo who sets them all by the ears is himself 'gulled' by his own cupidity. The writing of this play is excellent, both in matter and form. The descriptive humour of the passage in which old Gostanzo contrasts the courtly manners of his own days with the stolidity of the 'tobacco-drinking' youth of the new generation[5]; the waggish dialectics—something in Lyly's style—of the Page[1]; and the impudent rhetoric of Valerio's concluding harangue on a painfully humorous subject of which the Elisabethan comic writers seem never to have tired[2], as well as the burlesque declaration of divorce read out by the Notary[3], furnish instances of comic writing of the most entertaining variety. And in such a passage as this—

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[1] 'For it is written,' she says, 'we must pass to perfection through all temptation, *Abacucke* the fourth.'

[2] Dowsecer's speech to Cicero, and the speeches ensuing, which are mostly in admirable blank verse, are printed as prose in the old edition, which the reprint (following the doubtful principle adopted in this series) literally reproduces.

[3] See Henslowe's *Diary*, July 2, 1599, where 'full payment' is recorded to Chapman for his play called *The World runs on Wheels*, '*and now All Fools, but the Fool.*'

[4] Valerio's description of him is capital. He is

> 'A thing whose soul is specially employ'd
> In knowing where best Gloves, best Stockings, Waistcoats
> Curiously wrought are sold;'—

milliners' shops are his favourite haunt, the art of shopping is his chief accomplishment,

> 'and for these womanly parts
> He is esteem'd a witty gentleman.' (Act v.)

[5] Act ii.

> 'How blind is Pride! what Eagles we are still
> In matters that belong to other men—
> What Beetles in our own[4]'—

we have that touch which we are accustomed to call Shaksperean, but which occurs frequently enough in Chapman to render too absolute a use of the epithet hazardous.

The Gentleman Usher (*pr.* 1606).

In *The Gentleman Usher* (printed 1606, but possibly produced some years earlier, after an interval in his dramatic activity due to his Homeric labours) Chapman has attempted a larger task than his genius, perhaps rather too hastily called on to perform it, seems to have been equal to accomplishing. This play begins as a light comedy of intrigue. The aged Duke Alphonso is bent upon marrying the fair Margaret, of whom his son is deeply enamoured. While his son's wishes are seconded by a lord of the name of Strozza, the Duke's confidant is a counsellor who calls himself Medice,—an ungentle, malignant fellow[5]. The first two acts are occupied with entertainments at the house of Margaret's father, in the arrangement of which his busy and conceited Gentleman Usher takes a prominent part. With the third act the real action of the play—both comic and serious—begins. The former may be dismissed at once; it is chiefly concerned with the humours of the personage who gives his name to the play. (There is however another diverting character, that of the foolish youth Pogio, who thinks 'gentility must be fantastical,' and disports himself throughout the piece, which commences with his telling his dreams.) But the Gentleman Usher, a silly busybody whom the Prince gains over by flattery, without using him to much purpose, is not drawn with any striking success, and cannot rank high as a comic creation. The serious interest lies in two episodes. Strozza having been dangerously wounded with an arrow by a huntsman suborned by Medice, breaks out into raving despair over his pain and peril; but the solemn counsel of his wife Cynanche restores him to self-control; and he thereupon dilates—in a passage not however to be numbered among Chapman's finer efforts—on the blessings of conjugal fidelity. His now pious frame of mind enables him, as by divine inspiration, to see into the future; he knows that on the seventh day the arrow rankling in his breast will be removed from it, and he foresees the terrible danger to which his friend the Prince is exposed. For meanwhile Prince Vincentio has bound himself to Margaret by a vow to which (quite in accordance with Elisabethan notions) the lovers have resolved to attach all the significance of marriage itself. The finely-written scene where they exchange oaths over this strange ceremony[1], while full of deep passion, at the same time reveals on the part of the poet a strange recklessness of feeling with regard to the institution of marriage itself, which he makes his lovers set at defiance. Their secret love is discovered by the Duke; Vincentio is mortally wounded by the eager Medice; and Margaret, in order to escape from a hateful doom, disfigures her beauty. This painful situation, the last element in which must surely have seemed hideous on the stage, is finally solved by a *deus ex machina* in the shape of a skilful physician who cures the Prince's wound and restores the beauty of Margaret. The villainous practices of Medice having been revealed and his dark antecedents disclosed by himself (his name was originally Mendice, and he was of no country, never christened, and brought up among the gipsies), he is ignominiously dismissed; and all ends happily.

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[1] Act iii. [2] Act v. [3] Act iv.

[4] Act iv. The metaphor seems imitated, but with far less power of expression, by Randolph in his *The Muse's Looking-Glass* (act i. sc. 4).—Dr. E. Koeppel, *u. s.* p. 7, is inclined to think that the character of Master Ford in *The Merry Wives* was present to Chapman in creating that of Cornelio in *All Fools*.

[5] Nobody besides the Duke has a good word for him, except the old hag Corteza, who is pleased with his failure as an orator:

> 'Me thought I likde his manly being out;
> It becomes Noblemen to doe nothing well.'

His hatred of learning resembles that of the Fox in Spenser's *Mother Hubberd's Tale*.

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[1] Act iv. The passage is too long for quotation. I wonder Charles Lamb should not have extracted it.

It will be seen that this comedy is full of ambitious elements; but having indicated these, I need dwell on it no longer, since it seems to me in execution by no means one of Chapman's happiest plays. The daring inventiveness which he here exhibits in the devising of original situations required to be seconded by unusual labour in composition; and this, strange to say, he seems on the present occasion to have spared. Strozza's speeches—with one notable exception[1]—rise little above a merely rhetorical level; and although the principal scene between Vincentio and Margaret is almost startling in its passionateness, it remains isolated in the course of a love-intrigue otherwise carried out without much power of style. And the chief comic character is as far removed from the grave irony which envelopes that of Malvolio as from the vivacious humour pervading that of Chapman's own Monsieur d'Olive[2].

Monsieur d'Olive (pr. 1606).

Monsieur d'Olive, also printed 1606, but probably rather later in date of production than *The Gentleman Usher*, is one of our most diverting Elisabethan comedies. The main plot of this play is perspicuous and interesting. The gallant Vendome, returning from a long voyage, finds two difficult tasks awaiting him. The lady to whom he has devoted his chivalrous service—bound to her by one of those artificial ties of courtesy with which Provence, where the scene of the comedy may be supposed to lie, was in the Middle Ages familiar—has in revenge for her husband's unjust jealousy secluded herself from the world, as she vows, for ever. His sister, whom he dearly loved, has died[1]; and her widower, the Count St. Anne, inconsolable in his grief, has caused her body to be embalmed instead of giving it Christian burial, and lives only for his grief. To bring this pair back to reason is the object of Vendome's labours; and he accomplishes his end very skilfully. Feigning to be in love with his 'mistress'' sister[2], who is herself at heart enamoured of the faithful Count St. Anne, he prevails on the latter to plead his cause, and thus brings the inconsolable widower within the reach of his own cure. This situation is very charmingly worked out; not quite so convincing is the cure brought about in Martia by the fears excited in her as to the faithfulness of her repentant husband, which induce her at last to abandon her retirement, so as to save him from shame.

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[1] See the remarkable passage in which he gives vent to a political philosophy which must have sounded strange in the ears of any courtier of King James who heard it:

'And what's a Prince? Had all been virtuous men,
There never had been Prince upon the earth,
And so no subject; all men had been Princes:
A virtuous man is subject to no Prince,
But to his soul and honour; which are laws,
That carry Fire and Sword within themselves
Never corrupted, never out of rule;
What is there in a Prince? That his least lusts
Are valued at the lives of other men,
When common faults in him should prodigies be,
And his gross dotage rather loath'd than sooth'd.' (Act v.)

[2] Dr. Koeppel, I see, considers that Bassiolo, the Gentleman Usher, was designed as a 'Concurrenzfigur' to Malvolio, and that Monsieur d'Olive was in some respects an elaboration of the earlier personage created by the same hand.

This double plot would of itself have sufficed for a pleasing and graceful comedy; but the author has provided materials of broader mirth in one of the most original characters of our comic drama. Indeed, this character is so original that it has been utterly misinterpreted[3], and probably the intention underlying it could not be fully brought out except by an actor of genuine humour as well as intelligence. Monsieur d'Olive is a gentleman about town without any merits or any conscience of his own to speak of; but mighty well pleased with himself, and as ready to dispense his own wit as to be the cause of wit in others. He is thus a compound of fool and wag—and in the way in which these extremes are made to meet in him lies the originality of the character[1]. From the 'liberty' of his 'chamber,' where it is his joy to 'drink Sack and talk Satire,' he is called by the malicious device of two roguish courtiers to assume the office of ambassador—of course merely in order to furnish sport for the Court; and the sublime self-consciousness[2] with which he accepts the post, and, by way of showing forth his powers as an 'orator,' repeats the famous speech in praise of Tobacco formerly delivered by him at a kind of Discussion Forum[3], is in the richest vein of fun. He hires a retinue of followers, of whom he has a most diverting account to give; but when he is ready to start, it suddenly appears that the object of his mission has been already accomplished, and that he has in short been 'gulled.' He goes off however in imperturbable good-humour; and his tormentors are left lamenting that 'here we may strike the *Plaudite* to our Play, my Lord fool's gone: all our audience will forsake us.' They contrive, notwithstanding, to bring him back for some further merriment by addressing to him a feigned love-letter as from a lady of the Court; and he is thus enabled to wind up the comedy with a witty speech about 'raising fortunes,' the point of which was not likely to be lost by an audience in days when knights adventurers and humbler species of speculators such as Monsieur d'Olive enumerates were as thick as motes in a sunbeam. 'An a man,' he observes, 'will play the fool and be a Lord, or be a fool and play the Lord, he shall be sure to want no followers, so there be hope to raise their fortunes.' This admirably droll personage therefore deservedly gives his name to an excellent comedy.

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[1] How sweet is the pathos, and how beautiful the verse, of the passage in which this is narrated:

> 'Your worthy sister, worthier far of heaven
> Than this unworthy hell of passionate Earth,
> Is taken up amongst her fellow Stars.'

For a longer passage of singular power of expression see St. Anne's speech at the beginning of act iii.

[2] The use of the terms 'brother' and 'sister' in this play requires considerable vigilance in the reader, who moreover should be on his guard against the assignment of many speeches to the wrong persons in the old edition and the reprint.

[3] By Hazlitt (with all his sagacity frequently an unsafe guide), who considers 'the introductory sketch of Monsieur d'Olive' 'the undoubted prototype of that light, flippant, gay, and infinitely delightful class of character of the professed men about town, which we have in such perfection in Wycherley and Congreve, both in the sentiments and in the style of writing.' Bodenstedt (*u. s.*, p. 333) institutes a similar comparison.

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[1] It therefore in some respects resembles one of the most humorous comic conceptions of the latter-day stage, the late Mr. Sothern's Lord Dundreary. There are points in which the resemblance is ludicrously close. Thus above all Monsieur d'Olive's invariable approval of any facetious remark offered by an interlocutor: 'Ever good i' faith.' 'Bitter, in verity, bitter. But good still in its kind.' 'Good again.' 'Bitter still.'

[2] 'Above all sins,' he superfluously prays, 'heaven shield me from the sin of blushing.'

[3] Preceded by the speech against Tobacco made by the weaver, who held it at hot enmity, being unfitted for its enjoyment by his nose, which '(according to the Puritanic cut)' had a 'narrow bridge.'

May-Day (*pr.* 1611).

May-Day (printed 1611) is a 'witty Comedie' of no elevated type,—a farrago in short of vulgar plots and counterplots, with no special humour in any of the characters to make it worthy of notice, though the liveliness of its diction bespeaks its authorship[1]. Possibly it was written at a rather earlier date than the two comedies last noticed[2]. Among the more prominent characters are an amorous old dotard, who in the pursuit of his unseasonable ambition assumes the disguise of a chimney-sweep ; a waiting-woman called Temperance, an amusing specimen of the Dame Quickly class ; and a captain called Quintiliano, who thinks war 'exceeding naught,' carries on his campaigns with 'munition of manchet, napery, plates, spoons, glasses, and so forth,' and has for 'Lieutenant' a promising youth of the name of Innocentio.

The Widow's Tears (*pr.* 1612).

The Widdowes Teares (printed 1612) is a comedy sufficiently disagreeable in subject, but not ineffective in execution. It exemplifies in the persons of the real widow Eudora and the self-supposed widow Cynthia the hollowness of female declarations of fidelity. The tempter in the former case is 'Tharsalio the wooer,' an energetic personage whose manner of achieving his object humorously illustrates the truth of Thackeray's sarcasm that an infallible method for making your neighbour give way to you is to tread on his toes. Cynthia is deceived into a belief in her husband's death by her husband himself, who afterwards, disguised as a soldier, visits her in the tomb where she is lamenting his loss. This uncomfortable mixture of a ghastly situation with a comic action is certainly not pleasant to read. The story was borrowed by Chapman from that of the Matron of Ephesus in the *Satyricon* of Petronius.

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[1] Besides a passage in ridicule of the inevitable *Spanish Tragedy*, it may be worth while to notice the quotation of phrases from *Hamlet*, Marston's *Antonio and Mellida*, and form Marlowe's *Dido*, with a bombastic line from which the comedy closes.

[2] Cf. Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. ii. p. 57.

The character of the feeble Spartan suitor of Eudora, Rebus, who persistently declines to resent an injury because of the respect due to 'the place,' as well as those of Eudora's *soi-disant* 'reformed Tenant,' the disreputable Arsace, and of the imbecile Governor, the very incarnation of an incompetent magistrate[1] ('the perfect draught of a most brainless, imperious upstart'), are fairly amusing.

The Masque of the Middle Temple and Lincoln's Inn (Feb. 1613).

The above exhaust the list of the extant dramatic works of Chapman written entirely by himself. On his *Maske of the Middle Temple and Lyncolns Inne*, performed at the celebration of the nuptials of the Princess Elisabeth and the Elector Palatine in February 1613, it is needless to dwell. It formed one of a series of masques contributed by Campion, Chapman, and Beaumont (who wrote that of *The Inner Temple and Gray's Inn*[2]) on this celebrated occasion; but though there was never a finer subject for a composition of the kind, it cannot be said that Chapman's effort is in any way remarkable; the lyrics are indeed in my judgment poor.

Plays written by Chapman conjointly with other authors:

But, like most of his contemporaries, he was associated in the production of plays with other dramatists. Of the comedy of *Eastward Hoe* incidental mention has already been made[3], and since I conceive this exceedingly well-written piece to owe more to Chapman than to Marston, while Jonson probably only contributed some touches, the present seems the most appropriate place in which to speak of it.

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[1] 'Peace varlet; dost chop with me? I say it is imagined thou hast murdered Lysander. How it will be proved I know not. Thou shalt therefore presently be had to execution, as justice in such case requireth. Soldiers take him away.' The Governor's justice has the advantage of logical sequence over Dogberry's, which it resembles in phraseology (*Much Ado*, act iv. sc. 2).—Mr. Fleay (*u. s.*, p. 61) ingeniously supposes this satire on judicial incompetence to be Chapman's revenge for his imprisonment on account of *Eastward Ho.*

[2] They are all given in Nichols, *Progresses, &c. of James I*, vol. iii. According to Dugdale's *Origines Judiciales*, cited by Collier, vol. i. p. 365, Chapman's masque cost the Society of Lincoln's Inn alone rather more than £1,000. A curious German account of its production appeared in 1613, and is reprinted at length by Theodor Marx in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xxix (1894).—Jonson was at this time absent abroad. John Taylor, the Water-poet, contributed an account of the 'Sea-Fights and Fire-Workes' (accompanied by verses) entitled *Heaven's Blessing and Earth's Joy.*

[3] *Ante*, pp. 311 *seqq.*; 412.

Chapman, Marston, (and Jonson's Eastward Ho (*pr.* 1605).

Eastward Hoe (printed 1605) may be unhesitatingly described as one of the liveliest and healthiest, as it is one of the best-constructed, comedies of its age. Unlike the plays of *Westward Hoe* and *Northward Hoe*[1], with which in its Prologue any comparison is courteously deprecated[2], *Eastward Hoe* is something better than a coarse dramatic satire on the corrupting influences of Court fashions and vices upon City life. In a lucidly constructed plot it exhibits the opposite results of a modest pursuit of the path of duty, and of a wanton hankering after a sham gentility. This homely lesson is exemplified in the person of the virtuous and the idle apprentice—Golding and Quicksilver—and of the two daughters of their master, the goldsmith Touchstone. Of these, Mildred contents herself with the honest heart and hand of the industrious apprentice, and is rewarded by seeing him rise rapidly to a position of prosperity and dignity. In the course of the play he already attains to the dignity of deputy-alderman, and his father-in-law is able to prophesy for him a reputation beyond that of Dick Whittington himself[3]. Girtred (Gertrude), on the other hand, encouraged by the foolish vanity of her mother, is consumed by an ambitious desire to ride in her own coach, and as the surest means towards consummating this aspiration, engages herself to marry a knight, Sir Petronel

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[1] *Vide infra*, under Dekker.

[2] The title is said not to have been chosen

'out of our contention to do better
Than that which is oppos'd to ours in title;
For that was good, and better cannot be.'

[3] 'Worshipful son! I cannot contain my self, I must tell thee; I hope to see thee one o' the monuments of our city, and reckon'd among her worthies to be remembered the same day with the Lady Ramsey and grave Gresham, when the famous fable of Whittington and his puss shall be forgotten, and thou and thy acts become the posies for hospitals; when thy name shall be written upon conduits, and thy deeds plaid i' thy lifetime by the best companies of actors, and be called their get-penny. This I divine and prophesy.'

Flash. Sir Petronel however is a mere 'thirty pound knight,' and a *chevalier d'industrie* to boot, or in the phraseology of the day, a 'knight adventurer.' While his bride sets off on a fool's errand in her coach, he is taking measures for departing with his congenial companions, Captain Seagull and Messrs. Spendal and Scapethrift, on a speculative voyage to the Eldorado of Virginia[1]. In this intended expedition Sir Petronel further associates with himself the prodigal apprentice, who has broken loose from all restraint, and the wife of a usurer. But as the company get drunk before entering the boat ready to convey them to their ship, a stormy night, of which they have neglected the warnings[2], wrecks them all on the Isle of Dogs, whence they are brought up before the virtuous deputy-alderman. After spending a few days in prison (where Quicksilver and Flash play the part of converted sinners) they are ultimately sent forth, sadder if not wiser men.

The humour of the successive scenes in this play is extremely fresh and natural, and the characters are full of life and spirit. The idle apprentice, with his quotations from the popular plays of the day[3] and his resolution to 'snore out his enfranchised state'; the foolish City girl, with *her* quotations from fashionable lyrics, her difficulty in knowing how to 'bear her hands' in her new gown, and her burning desire to be 'married to a most fine castle i' the country,' and to ride thither in her own coach; the knight, sick of town[1] and reckless of the faintest shadow of morality; the honest tradesman with his homely wisdom and his set phrase 'Work upon that now'; as well as the minor characters, the usurer Securitie, with his eloquent defence of his modest trade and his 'commodities' of 'figs and raisins,' the lawyer Bramble, and the keeper of the counter, Master Woolfe, who has had men almost of all religions in the land under his care, but on enquiry thinks the best religion was theirs 'that pay fees best: we never examine their consciences further,'—all these and others make up a group of *dramatis personae* far more varied than the usual set of City tradesmen with their frail wives and the fashionable enemies of their peace, who weary or disgust us in so many contemporary comedies. But the excellence of the plot is perhaps an even more exceptional merit; nor is there any reason why, certain omissions being made, this admirable comedy should not have kept the stage to the present day[2].

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[1] 'I tell thee, gold is more plentiful there than copper is with us. . . . Why, man, all their dripping-pans are pure gold; and all the chains with which they chain up their streets are massy gold; and for rubies and diamonds, they go forth on holidays and gather 'em by the sea-shore, to hang on their children's coats, and stick in their children's caps, as commonly as our children wear saffron-gilt brooches and groats with holes in 'em.' The whole of this scene (act iii. sc. 2) is worth reading as an illustration of the gold-fever which prevailed in these times, and had received fresh fuel from Ralegh's *Discovery of Guiana*, published in 1596.

[2] 'A porpoise,' says Sir Petronel—'what 's that to the purpose?' (act iii. sc. 2). The description of the storm on the Thames (act iv. sc. 1) is extremely vivid.

[3] 'Ta, lyre, lyre, ro, who calls Jeronimo?' (act i. sc. 1). 'Holla, ye pampered ladies of Asia!' (act ii. sc. 1). 'I was a courtier in the Spanish court, and Don Andrea was my name.' (*ib.*)

Shirley and Chapman's The Ball (licensed 1632).

With Shirley, the last of the more noteworthy among the pre-Restoration dramatists, Chapman was associated in the composition of two plays, a tragedy and a comedy. The latter, called *The Ball* (licensed 1632, printed 1639), will be more appropriately noticed among Shirley's plays, while as to the former most readers will be inclined to follow Dyce in concluding 'nearly the whole'—or at least the body—of it to be from Chapman's pen. Mr. Swinburne unhesitatingly assumes it to be wholly his[3].

Chapman and Shirley's Chabot (licensed 1635).

The tragedy of *Chabot, Admiral of France*[4] (licensed 1635, printed 1639) recalls in the general nature of its subject Chapman's most striking tragedies, *Bussy d'Ambois*, *The Conspiracy of Byron*, and their respective sequels. But the difference in the subject is of importance; for while Bussy d'Ambois is a daring adventurer who rises by his boldness rather than his merits, and Biron a powerful vassal who falls by reason of his own insolent pride, Chabot, like the 'Loyal Subject' of Heywood's play, is the victim of jealousy and detraction, and remains, in evil as in good fortune, true to himself and to his lofty conception of his duty. The character of the hero—even apart from his traditional identification with a cause dear to Englishmen of Elisabethan nurture[1]—is therefore one which unlike that of Biron was sure of a sympathetic reception. The action of the play is founded on an episode of the latter part of the reign of Francis I, which cannot have been derived by the authors from any of the historians mentioned by Langbaine, or from Brantôme, none of whose works appeared in print before 1659; but in their representation of which they seem to have used not a little of Étienne Pasquier's collective work, *Les Recherches de la France* (1621)[2]. The fall of Philippe de Chabot, Count de Charni and de Busançois, ordinarily called in his life-time Admiral de Brion, who had long been favoured by Francis I, largely through the influence of his mistress, the Duchess d'Étampes, was brought about in 1541 by the Duke de Montmorency, Constable of France, and the Chancellor Poyet. In 1542, however, Francis I relieved Chabot from the fine imposed upon him and restored him to his good graces, Montmorency being obliged to leave the Court, while Poyet was tried and (in 1545) condemned by a commission[3]. Although, therefore, the dramatic version of the incidents almost inverts history—for the historical Chabot was favoured by a royal mistress and the historical Poyet came to grief (he was subsequently, however, liberated from prison) by reason of his remarks against female influence, it has a political as well as a poetic interest. Personal freedom and manliness of character remained in the conception of our Elisabethans—including Shakspere—the chief actual or possible protest against the changes and chances of arbitrary rule. This drama is accordingly high-spirited in every sense, and true pathos abounds in the concluding act, in which the hero, though restored to the royal favour, dies of a broken heart in the presence of his master[1]. The play contains many passages written in Chapman's best manner; yet, although Mr. Swinburne justly regards it as 'more equable' in treatment than any of its compeers, I cannot but attribute the life-like sketch of the Proctor-General—who successively delivers, with the same promptitude and goodwill, interminable speeches on the two opposite sides of the question—to Shirley's hand. It would not be difficult to trace in this tragedy allusions to the vices by which the judicial system of England came more and more to be tainted in the Jacobean age. In any case, and to whatever extent this play may be attributable to Chapman, it ranks worthily by the side of his best dramatic works.

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[1] 'I'll out of this wicked town as fast as my horse can trot! Here's now no good action for a man to spend his time in. Taverns grow dead; ordinaries are blown up; players are at a stand; houses of hospitality at a fall; not a feather waving, not a spur gingling anywhere.' (Act ii. sc. 1.)

[2] It was in fact adapted (by Mrs. Lennox) under the name of *Old City Manners* for the Drury Lane stage as late as 1775, having been revived after the Restoration under a more significant local title in 1685. Cf. Genest, vol. i. p. 441; vol. v. p. 481.

[3] See the fine criticism, *u. s.*, pp. 107 *seqq.* Mr. Fleay, *English Drama*. vol. ii. p. 241, considers that the play was an old one of Chapman's written 1604 *c.*, and that the last three acts were rewritten and altered by Shirley.

[4] Printed in vol. vi of Dyce's edition of Shirley's *Dramatic Works and Poems*.

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[1] 'I never,' writes Michelet in one of the notes to vol. viii of his *Histoire de France*, 'look in the Louvre upon the fine and pensive statue of the unhappy Chabot, one of the *chefs d'œuvre* of the Renaissance, without thinking of his noble saying to the King. Francis I happening to speak of the complaints of the Protestants on the death of their fellows, burnt in France and in England, the Admiral observed: 'We make confessors' [in the early Christian sense of the term], 'and the King of England makes martyrs.' 'A certain amount of courage,' adds Michelet, 'was needed in order in those days to declare so openly that putting Protestants to death meant making them confessors of the truth.'

[2] See Koeppel, *u. s.*, pp. 52 *seqq.*

[3] Cf. E. A. Schmidt, *Geschichte Frankreichs*, vol. ii. (1840), pp. 668–70.

Plays attributed to Chapman on insufficient grounds.

To Chapman has also been ascribed, but in passing only, *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*, of which some mention will be made below. There seems no reason for pausing on this assumption[2]; and still less for giving credit to the tradition, doubtfully mentioned by Langbaine, that Chapman was responsible for the 'Comical Moral censuring the Follies of the Age,' printed in 1619 under the title of *Two Wise Men, and all the rest Fools*, the satire of which, as is conjectured with much probability by Mr. Fleay, seems to have been mainly directed against the much-travelled and much-harassed Anthony Munday[1].

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[1] 'Thus in the summer a tall flourishing tree
Transplanted by strong hand, with all her leaves
And blooming pride upon her, makes a shew
Of spring, tempting the eye with wanton blossom;
But not the sun, with all his amorous smiles,
The dews of morning, or the tears of night
Can root her fibres in the earth again,
Or make her bosom kind, to growth and bearing,
But the tree withers.' (Act v. sc. 3.)

[2] Cf. Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. ii. p. 331, where it is noticed under its supposed original name, *The Usurping Tyrant*. Mr. Fleay, chiefly I suppose on the strength of its tremendous plot, thinks that Cyril Tourneur was the writer; Mr. Swinburne holds that there is some colour for the attribution of

Chapman as a dramatist.

From the preceding remarks on Chapman's various plays it will have been gathered how high an estimate should in my opinion be formed of the poetic gifts of which they give evidence. Although destitute of a knowledge of dramatic effect neither in the tragic nor in the comic branch of the playwright's art, it would almost seem as if Chapman had lacked the power, when working alone, of fully developing a character by means of dramatic action; certainly none of the comedies or tragedies written by him alone are as stage-plays comparable to *Eastward Hoe* and *Chabot* respectively. But though falling short of this power, he is happy in the invention of character in both tragedy and comedy,—in the latter more particularly, as his Monsieur d'Olive would alone suffice to prove.

The length of time over which his known years of activity as a dramatist extend would lead one *a priori* to expect a change, or changes, in style to be observable in the course of his labours. His tragedies, however, on the whole exhibit the same characteristics of manner, though these are most marked in the *Bussy d'Ambois* plays—themselves, it will be remembered, not the products of their author's youth. Of the two tragedies posthumously printed as his, the one (*Revenge for Honour*) stands on a far higher level

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the authorship to Chapman, though he considers the style of the play 'unlike that of Chapman, Massinger, or Tourneur, but . . . very like the style of Middleton.'

[1] This production is in seven acts; but Langbaine (p. 64) supposes this 'might rather be the Printer's Ignorance, than the Poet's Intention; for certainly M^r. *Chapman* better understood the Rules of the Dramma; tho' I am led only by Tradition to believe this Play to be his.'—As to the character of the English-born Signor Antonio see Fleay, *u. s.*, vol. ii. p. 333; cf. as to Anthony Munday *ante*, vol. i. pp. 431 *seqq.*

than the other (*Alphonsus*). Among his comedies the earliest are certainly the least advanced.

The influence of the epical form of composition to which Chapman had become habituated is indisputably observable in his dramas. He loves to narrate at full length; thus we find him in three of his plays[1] resorting to the classical expedient of a 'Nuntius' or Messenger, and in others he lingers with evident pleasure over passages of a narrative kind. But this influence is not so marked as might be expected; and both in tragedy and in comedy he shows a strong sense of the importance of situation, although to the expediency of a progressive conduct of the action he is not always sufficiently alive. In style he is too fond of indulging a tendency to rhetoric, which, in the earlier of his tragedies in particular, at times degenerates into bombast; but the instances of this in his plays remain after all the exception and not the rule. Of humour as well as wit he must be allowed to have possessed a real though not a very fertile vein.

His strength to be sought in particular passages.

But the strength of Chapman lies in particular passages rather than in his plays as a whole. With the exception of Shakspere ('always except Plato,' says the Duke of Savoy in *Byron's Conspiracy*), he has no superior or equal among our Elisabethan dramatists in the beauty of individual passages. This beauty is not solely one of form, nor is the pleasure derived from it merely due to the admiration excited by Chapman's poetic inventiveness, ranging over a wide field in the choice of similes and settling on its choice with wonderful felicitousness. Like Shakspere, he is able at times to reveal by these sudden flashes of poetic power depths of true feeling as well as of true wisdom. His observation is strikingly original as well as apt, and there is often something proverbial or gnomic about these passages, in which the physical as well as the moral world is called into play, and of which (if there be any profit in anthologies) it would be well worth while to attempt a complete list. He is particularly effective in his touches concerning the nature of women, whose sex he seems to have studied rather than loved—for he has hardly drawn a single female character of note (unless it be Tamyra), and those which he has drawn are for the most part examples of frailty rather than of purity. But his wisdom rises to its greatest dignity in connexion with a theme on which he must have thought deeply as well as keenly, and which rises far above the mere transitory feeling of the day on political topics. Again and again, this poet returns to his conception of true freedom as contained within the fulfilment of duty and obedience to law, while in lawlessness, whether in the despot or in the rebel, he finds a sin against the enduring principle of Order.

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[1] *The Blind Beggar*; *Bussy d'Ambois*; *Caesar and Pompey*.

Influence of his classical learning upon his style.

Chapman's style is unmistakeably influenced by his classical learning; but he cannot be pronounced pedantically fond of displaying it. With the exception of *Alphonsus*, his plays, though abounding in classical allusions, are not, either throughout or in parts, overlaid by them; he is too genuine a scholar to quote with complacency even out of season. His references to Homer are of course very numerous, and it would certainly have made a perceptible difference in Chapman's dramatic dialogue, had the concatenation of negatives suggested by the speculative Clermont stopped this particular source of illustrations[1]. Other classical writers, however, are used as almost equally familiar authorities. after a fashion very different from the superficial show of classical learning in which so many of our earlier dramatists were wont to indulge. Yet although Chapman was manifestly a diligent student of historical as well as poetic literature, although he was to a certainty in the habit of reading French memoir-history, and probably well acquainted with the German tongue, his learning cannot in any case have extended over so wide a range as that of Ben Jonson, whose wonderful mental appetite absorbed almost every kind of material.

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[1] 'Had faith, nor shame, all hospitable rights
Been broke by Troy, Greece had not made that slaughter.
Had that been sav'd (says a Philosopher)
The Iliads and Odysses had been lost.'
The Revenge of Bussy d'Ambois (act ii).

The same play (act iv) contains a curious passage as to pedantic critics of Homer.

His versification.

Finally, after the quotations incidentally given, it will be needless to speak at length of the extreme beauty of Chapman's versification. Some of his earlier plays show traces of at least one mannerism which he seems afterwards to have avoided—*viz.* the repetition of a closing word in several lines near to one another[1]; while in what, if his, was probably one of his last plays (*Revenge for Honour*) the excessive use of feminine endings is characteristic of a school which he assuredly did not contribute to found[2]. But, in general, Chapman's line holds the mean between the dissolved sweetness of Beaumont and Fletcher and the self-contained strength displayed by Marlowe in his earliest works; and in certain nobilities of versification, as in a lordly use of the matter which informs poetic style, Chapman perhaps more nearly resembles Shakspere, of whose achievements he was so manifestly cognisant, than can be asserted of any of their common contemporaries.

The names of the two dramatists whose works I proceed in the next instance briefly to review are connected with Jonson's after a less pleasing fashion than is the name of Chapman, whom he 'loved,' while upon Dekker and Marston he poured forth his most vigorous vituperation. Both these, however, and Dekker in especial, have a higher claim upon our notice than that of having provoked a 'retaliation' administered in an ungentle age by a not very gentle hand.

Among the dramatists of this period, THOMAS DEKKER[3]

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[1] I have noted this more particularly in *All Fooles*.

[2] Dr. Elze (*u. s.*, p. 37) observes that in *Alphonsus* 'the archaic dissolution of the final *ion* and of similar terminations at the close (sometimes even in the body) of the line is intentionally and almost religiously observed'; whereas in Chapman's earlier plays this dissolution only occurs exceptionally. From *Revenge for Honour* it seems so far as I have observed to be absent—another argument against the supposition that *Alphonsus* and *Revenge for Honour* were written by the same poet at the same period of his career.

[3] *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker, with Illustrative Notes and a Memoir of the Author* (by R. H. Shepherd), 4 vols. 1873 (Pearson's Reprint). Dekker's non-dramatic works, with *Patient Grissill*, were edited by Dr. Grosart for the *Huth Library* (5 vols. 1884–1886), with a brief *Memorial-Introduction* in vol. v. For a complete list of Dekker's productions

Thomas Dekker (1570 *c. to* 1640 *c.*).

holds a place, not indeed of the highest eminence, but assured to him by a peculiar combination of original qualities. Charles Lamb, whose rare power of sympathetic insight renders him so unerring a finder of the pearls that lie thickly scattered throughout the remains of our early drama, but who at times is not altogether free from arbitrariness in his general estimates of the literary position of the writers criticised by him, extols Dekker as 'having poetry enough for anything,' and so competent a judge as Mr. A. H. Bullen considers that 'his best plays rank with the masterpieces of the Elisabethan drama.' Mr. Swinburne revels in the opportunities for paradox suggested by the subject, but appeals with incontrovertible force to 'the wild wood-notes of passion and fancy and pathos which in Dekker's happiest moments, even when they remind us of Shakespeare's, provoke no sense of unworthiness or inequality in comparison with these.' But, to employ a term which, I allow, should be used with caution, Dekker's plays seem to me to lack the distinction which is an indispensable element in literary compositions meriting such encomia as the above. Touches of a quite irresistible pathos are indeed to be found in Dekker; his lyrical gift, though the measure of it has possibly been overrated, is incontestable; a particular species of humour, not the less noteworthy because of its popular ring, he most certainly had at his command; and when in his happiest mood he was capable of a native freshness of treatment such as was foreign to Ben Jonson and of which the later Elisabethan drama at large all but lost the secret. But notwithstanding Dekker's prolific productivity as a playwright, the inventive powers of his imagination were somewhat narrowly circumscribed; and the rudeness of his form is not entirely due to haste in composition. The whole texture of his genius was unmistakeably coarse; and little if any progressive advance is perceptible in his works when compared

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see the notice of him by Mr. A. H. Bullen in vol. xiv of *The Dictionary of National Biography* (1888); see also Dr. Nott's abundantly annotated edition of *The Gul's Hornebooke* (1812). Mr. Swinburne's essay on Thomas Dekker appeared in *The Nineteenth Century* for January, 1887.

with one another. Undoubtedly, in reviewing the long list of extant plays with which his name is associated, we are in many cases hampered by the difficulty or impossibility of determining the respective shares of himself and of his coadjutors, whose specific gravity varies from that of Massinger to that of Anthony Munday; but neither in the works in which he only collaborated with others, nor in those which he wrote alone, can he in any instance be asserted to have realised that ideal of dramatic power and effect of which he seems to have had a not inadequate appreciation[1].

His life and literary reputation.

Dekker's life, like many of his plays, seems to have had London for its main scene; and, as is most notably shown in the satirical pictures filling the tracts of which the supply fully kept pace with his dramatic productivity, no one better learnt to know the town from end to end. Here he was born[2], apparently about 1570 or at a rather later date, of unknown parentage[1]; and here by the year 1598 he had begun his curiously two-fold career as a writer[2]. In this year was published a poem which, on the strength of the initials 'T. D.' indicating the author, has been generally ascribed to Dekker, though the temptation is strong to follow Mr. Swinburne in preferring to assign it to Thomas Delaney,—or to any one else with no reputation to speak of. But the doggerel, and the incidental sensationalism, of *Canaan's Calamity*[3] seems to have caught the fancy of the town, and Dekker must be allowed to have been a man of several styles. In any case there is indisputable evidence that even shortly before this year 1598 opened, he had entered into dealings with Henslowe as to work for the theatre. In December 1597 he received payment for additions to Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*[4], and in the January following for a 'book' by himself, called *Phaeton*[5]—very probably an earlier version of the masque afterwards recast, with or without his assistance, by Ford under the title of *The Sun's Darling*. His earliest extant play, *The Shoemakers' Holiday* (1599), is redolent of the life of the City. But although Dekker is never weary of celebrating her traditions or of pointing her sins;—while he studied her in her periods of affliction both present[6] and to come[7];—while he displays an extraordinary intimacy with the ways and the by-ways of her gallants and her gulls[8], her professions (especially that of the Law[9], so near to Letters), her crafts and her rogueries innumerable[1];—still (or, perhaps, in part because of the multitudinous deviations of her daily life), London seems to have been no 'kindly nurse' to him. Of the difficulties which beset the playwright's vocation he had his full share. Already in February 1598 Henslowe, who in the previous month had lent a sum for the purchase of a play of Dekker's writing[2], put down a further payment 'to discharge Mr. Dicker owt of the counter in the powltrey[3]'—a locality of which the dramatist preserved a very distinct remembrance, and which in a play written by him conjointly with Middleton[4] is with grim humour described as 'an university' where 'men pay more dear for their wit than any where.' And later in his life he spent three years (from 1613 to 1616, according to Oldys) in the King's Bench prison, whence he wrote in grateful terms to his old employer, the generous-hearted Edward Alleyn[5]. For the rest, his celebrity as a playwright had continuously grown, and had doubtless been increased by means of his quarrel with Ben Jonson, with whom, as with so many other contemporary authors, he had been previously associated as a writer for the stage. In 1604—the year after that in which he had commemorated the death and funeral of Queen Elisabeth, together with the visitation of London by the Plague[6],—he was entrusted with a large share of the devising of the *Magnificent Entertainment on King James' passage through London*[7], and in later years he seems to have been occasionally employed in similar compositions in honour of new Lord Mayors[1]. Although Dekker seems to have had at least one generous patron[2], he must have mainly depended for support upon his literary labours. He seems to have written for the stage so long as there was any demand for his work, and then, while employed occasionally upon pageants, to have found his chief resource in the production of prose-tracts. As a matter of course, the paramount principle of a line of authorship which largely anticipated certain branches of modern journalism was to let no opportunity slip, and Dekker was certainly not slow in using opportunities. But there is noticeable in him—and here of course the two sides of his literary growth show themselves of twin origin—a literary tendency which finds a natural outlet in humorous sketches of character applicable without essential variations to most periods of manners; in *The Batchelars Banquet* (1603), for instance—too substantial a piece to be, according to the Elisabethan use of the word, appropriately named—he discourses of 'the variable humours of Women,' in the mock didactic tone that seems necessary to the effective bottling of this volatile sort of salts. He essayed almost every kind of controversial or satirical invective, professedly imitating Nashe in the tract printed in 1606 but reprinted in the following year under the title of *A Knight's Conjuring*, which interests us by several references to other dramatists[3], following a celebrated German model in his *Gul's Hornebooke* which, he allows, 'hath a relish of Grobianisme[4]'; and (if it be his) appearing in *The Double PP*, &c., in the character of an English Protestant enraged by the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot[5]. One of his prose tracts[6] consists of a series of prayers, eminently

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[1] See the Prologue to *If this be not a good Play*, &c.:—

'Give me that Man,
Who when the Plague of an impostum'd brains
Infects a Theatre, and hotly reigns,
Killing the hearers' hearts, that the vast rooms
Stand empty, like so many dead men's Tombs,
Can call the banish'd Auditor home, and tie
His ear with golden chains to his Melody;
Can draw with adamantine pen even creatures
Forg'd out of th' hammer, on tiptoe to reach up
And (from rare silence) clap their brawny hands
T' applaud what their charm'd soul scarce understands.
That Man give me, whose breast, fill'd by the Muses
With Raptures, into a second them infuses;
Can give an Actor Sorrow, Rage, Joy, Passion,
Whilst he again, by self-same Agitation,
Commands the Hearers, sometimes drawing out Tears,
Then Smiles, and fills them both with Hopes and Fears,—
That Man give me.'

[2] In the Induction to the tract, *The Seven Deadly Sinnes of London*, he says, addressing London: 'O thou beautifullest daughter of two united Monarchies! from thy womb received I my being, from thy brests my nourishment.' Dr. Grosart reminds us of a parallel passage in *The Rod for Runawayes*: 'O London! (thou Mother of my Life, Nurse of my being) a hard-hearted sonne might I be counted, if here I should not dissolue all into teares, to hear thee pouring forth thy passionate condolements.'

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[1] As Mr. Fleay observes (*English Drama*, vol. i. pp. 120-121) the names of Thomas Dekker were too common to allow of our setting any value upon the extracts from registers of baptisms and deaths where the combination occurs.

[2] Nashe was prominent as a pamphleteer rather than as a playwright, and even in the case of Greene the fame of the novelist may be said to have continuously outshone that of the dramatist.

[3] *Canaan's Calamity, Jerusalem's Misery, and England's Mirror*, a narrative poem in the six-line stanza concerning the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus and its attendant horrors, which was repeatedly republished.

[4] *Henslowe's Diary*, p. 71.

[5] *Ibid.* p. 118.

[6] Cf. *The Wonderfull Yeare* 1603, *wherein is showed the picture of London. lying sicke of the Plague* (1603).

[7] Cf. *The Ravens Almanacke, foretelling of a Plague, Famine and Ciuill Warre* (1609).

[8] Cf. *The Gul's Hornebooke* (1609).

[9] Cf. *The Dead Tearme* (1608).

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[1] Cf. *The Belman of London* (1608) and its Second Part, *Lanthorne and Candlelight, or The Belman's Second Nights Walke* (1609).

[2] The entry of January 8 probably refers to *Phaeton*, as well as that of January 15.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] *The Roaring Girle.*

[5] Dr. Grosart suggests that a sentence in the *Epistle Dedicatorie* to Endymion Porter prefixed to *Dekker's Dreame* (1620)—'the Bed in which seuen years I lay dreaming, was filled with thornes instead of fethers, my pillow a rugged flint,' &c.—points to a continuous imprisonment of seven years. (In the frontispiece to the poem Dekker is represented as reposing in a rather elaborate 'four-poster,' which hardly suggests the King's Bench; but this is certainly not evidence.)

[6] *The Wonderful Yeare* 1603, published anonymously, but afterwards referred to as his by Dekker.

[7] See Fleay, *u. s.*, p. 130, as to the identity of this with what has been mentioned as a separate earlier *Device* by Dekker.

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[1] In 1612, 1628, and (probably) 1629. See *ibid.* pp. 116–117.

[2] See the Dedication of *Match Me in London* to Lodowick Carlell.

[3] Edited for the *Percy Society's Publications* (vol. v) by E. F. Rimbault.

[4] See as to Dedekind's famous satire of *Grobianus* ('the Cato of inverted etiquette') and Dekker's adaptation, Dr. Herford's *Literary Relations*, &c., pp. 384 *seqq.*

[5] This is in verse.

[6] *Four Birdes of Noah's Arke* (1609).

edifying, but, as Dr. Grosart conjectures with much probability, no doubt designed in the first instance at all events as a catchpenny. He has also been credited with the authorship of a versified invective against the Roman Catholics, and of collaboration in a Jest-book—but here literary responsibility begins to wax faint. Of the esteem in which he was held among his fellow-dramatists we know nothing; but the fact that he was chosen to lead the attack upon Ben Jonson on behalf of the dramatists who deemed themselves outraged by him, and that after Jonson had anticipated their revenge by an attack upon Dekker and Marston, it was the former who replied, furnishes the best proof of his prominence. He is usually supposed to have died shortly after the re-publication in 1637 of *Lanthorne and Candlelight* (the Second Part of *The Belman*). But I am not aware what evidence there is to connect him personally with this reprint; and Mr. Fleay deduces from the dates of the publications with which he was connected the conclusion that he died in 1632[1].

The Shoemakers' Holiday (acted 1599).

Among Dekker's extant plays his comedies seem to me to deserve the foremost mention. The earliest of these, *The Shoemakers' Holiday, or The Gentle Craft* (printed in 1600, and according to Henslowe acted already in the preceding year), has merits of its own, unsurpassed in any of its author's later works. It is difficult to understand how Mr. Fleay should have persuaded himself, seemingly in defiance of both external and internal evidence, that this play is not by Dekker. In this pleasant comedy 'nothing,' as the Prologue tells us, 'is purposed but mirth'; and its single-minded purpose is abundantly fulfilled. We should be ungrateful to quarrel with the rather forced way in which the disguise of the noble lover of the City damsel is accounted for; inasmuch as his becoming a shoemaker's journeyman creates the opportunity for the scenes in which the humour of the play centres. In these scenes the manners and customs of 'the gentle craft' are depicted [1], and in one of them we first meet with the most entertaining figure of the whole comedy—indeed the happiest comic creation of Dekker—the master-shoemaker, Simon Eyre. This worthy's well-deserved good-luck finally raises him to the dignity of Lord Mayor, in which capacity he gives an entertainment graced by the presence of the King to the shoemakers of London, and takes the opportunity of solving the difficulty of the plot of the piece. The character of Eyre is thoroughly fresh and original; and his jolting talk, consisting chiefly of an inexhaustible flow of brief sentences, nervous and sudden like the punches of a vigorous awl, is quite *sui generis*. He lavishes it with perfect impartiality upon high and low, upon his wife (whose own favourite phrase 'but let that pass' stands her in good stead), and (by express permission) upon the King himself; for he is a man who will let no one 'stand upon pishery pashery,' and knows 'how to speak to a Pope, to Sultan Solyman, to Tamerlane, an he were here . . . and shall I droop before my Sovereign?' The Dutch talk in this comedy is very racy, and at least as full of idiom as that of Dirk Hatteraick in Scott's masterpiece.

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[1] 'At last came the final resource, the publication of old plays not entirely his in 1631; and before these could be issued he died, almost certainly in 1632. The saddest story in all this book.'

Olde Fortunatus (*pr.* 1600).

In his second extant comedy Dekker might at first sight seem to have ventured upon ground less suited to his genius. *Olde Fortunatus* is of course founded in subject on the old tale, to which it would be hazardous to assign an exclusively Teutonic source, and which at all events derived contributions from the literature or life of nearly every European country. The first known version of the story is the German *Volksbuch* of 1509, in which however many Romance elements are traceable. It was repeatedly reprinted or reproduced in other languages during the sixteenth century, about the middle of which (1553) Hans

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[1] Dekker must have had a special love for shoemakers; for he recurs to them more than once in other plays, and in *Match me in London* repeats one of the situations of *The Shoemakers' Holiday*. 'The gentle craft' is a term often applied to shoemakers in our comic drama; *e.g.* in Fletcher's *Love's Cure* (act ii. sc. 1).

Sachs published his *tragedia* on the subject[1]. An organic connexion manifestly exists between the theme of Fortunatus and that of Faust; so that in *Olde Fortunatus* Dekker was at work on material cognate to that with which, though in an already dramatised shape, he was brought into contact when set to provide 'additions' to Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*[2]. Yet, so far as general treatment is concerned, Dekker's play is even ruder than Marlowe's, with which it has no pretence to compare either in tragic interest or in passages of supreme poetic beauty. There can be no doubt that the play as we have it represents an enlargement of the *Fortunatus* mentioned without the author's name by Henslowe as *The First Part of Fortunatus* in 1596 into *The Whole History of Olde Fortunatus*, mentioned by him with Dekker's name, and printed, in 1600[3]. Ushered in by a prologue, abounding in the sturdiest sort of flattery to 'Eliza' (then in her sixty-eighth year) 'flourishing like May,' the play opens, after an introductory speech by its hero, with an allegorical speech adorned by many historical allusions. Fortunatus having fixed his choice upon the gift of wealth, is accordingly endowed with the wonderful purse. He then begins a series of travels, in the course of which he robs the unwary Grand Turk of the wonderful hat; but his riches cannot save him from a miserable death. The lesson of his fate has however been lost upon his son Andelocia, with whose marvellous adventures—leading to an end even more wretched than that of his sire—the remainder of the play is occupied. The construction of this drama is necessarily lax; the wild defiance of the unities of time and place accords well with the nature of the subject; but as the author seems so strongly impressed by the moral of his story, he ought not to have allowed the virtuous and the vicious son of Fortunatus to come alike to grief. Among the minor characters may be noticed the honest serving-man Shadow, the clown of the piece[1], and the 'frantic lover' Orleans, the drawing of which latter character Lamb has much overpraised. Altogether this romantic comedy attracts by a singular vigour and freshness; but its principal charm lies in the appropriately *naïf* treatment of its simple, not to say childlike, theme.

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[1] *Der Fortunatus mit dem Wunschseckel*, a piece 'to be performed by two-and-twenty persons and numbering five actors.' (See the reprint in *Dichtungen von Hans Sachs*, edited by Julius Tittmann, vol. iii. (1871) in Goedeke and Tittmann's *Deutsche Dichter des 16. Jahrhunderts*. The epic and the dramatic form are but incompletely interfused in this effort. See on the whole subject of *Fortunatus* and Dekker's treatment of the theme, Herford, *u. s.*, pp. 203 *seqq.*

[2] Cf. *ante*, vol. i. pp. 336–7. Fortunatus is a reminiscence familiar to the Elisabethan drama. Reference is made to 'Oulde Fortunatus wishing cappe' in Marston's *Antonio and Mellida* (Part ii. act ii. sc. 2), and his cap and pouch are mentioned in Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Honest Man's Fortune*, act iv. sc. 2.—Tieck revised the story of Fortunatus in a favourite part of his *Phantasms* (vol. iii. 1816).

[3] See *Henslowe's Diary*, pp. 64 *seqq.*; 159, 161.—The final version seems to have formed the basis of the treatment of the theme in the English Comedians' German *Comoedia von Fortunato und seinem Seckel und Wünschhütlein* (1620), reprinted in the selection of their plays (1860) in Goedeke and Tittmann's series cited above.

Satiromastix (*pr.* 1602).

In his next comedy, the versatile Dekker sought to combine with the purposes of a dramatic entertainment those of a literary manifesto.

Of the circumstances which led to the production of *Satiromastix, or The Untrussing of the Humorous Poet* (printed 1602), enough has been stated above[2] to make it unnecessary to return to the subject at any length. In itself this comedy is in truth unequally matched with the attack—superabundant in vigour—to which it is intended as a reply; a light weight, as Mr. Swinburne says, is pitted against a heavy weight; and what seems most deserving of praise in Dekker's effort is the fact that its invective, though excessively coarse, is not altogether without indications of self-restraint. 'Horace' is indeed ridiculed for his supposed slowness of workmanship[3], his affectation of

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[1] Andelocia calls Shadow his 'little lean *Iniquity*.'

[2] pp. 307 *seqq.*

[3] I am not sure whether the most amusing passage in the play is not the first appearance of Horace 'sitting in a study behind a curtain; a candle by him burning, books lying confusedly,' where Jonson's supposed laboured method of composition, rather perhaps than his fine little Bacchanal itself (*Poetaster*, act iii. sc. 1), is thus ridiculed:

'*Hor.* (to himself):
To thee whose forehead swells with Roses,
Whose most haunted bower

learning, his egregious vanity, his splenetic bitterness of spirit, his want of straightforwardness in attack, his perversity in setting himself against the public voice [1], likewise for his old clothes and other peculiarities of his personal appearance. Crispinus and Demetrius, on the other hand, are of course the modest representatives of merit, slow to be provoked even to self-defence, and solemnly dignified in their utterances. The necessary amount of brutality is introduced by taunts against the 'bricklayer' and the 'poor journeyman player'; nor are the self-conscious pseudonyms —'Asper' and 'Criticus'—passed by under which 'Horace' had previously given vent to his humours; while the sentence of 'blanketing' and the final 'untrussing' itself savour of the most robust style of practical retort [2]. But the subject of all this ridicule cannot fairly be said to be treated with actual contempt as a poet, or the point of view to be wholly forgotten, of constituting his moral foibles rather than imputed literary impotence the foundation of the satire. So much credit for good sense, in the midst of a great amount of nonsense, should I think be allowed to the chosen

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Gives life and scent to every flower,
Whose most adorèd name encloses,
Things abstruse, deep and divine,
Whose yellow tresses shine
Bright as Eoan fire,
O me thy Priest inspire.
For I to thee and thine immortal name
In—in—in golden tunes,
For I to thee and thine immortal name
In—sacred raptures flowing, flowing, swimming, swimming:
In sacred raptures swimming,
Immortal name, game, dame, tame, lame, lame, lame,
—— hath, shame, proclaim, oh—
In sacred raptures flowing, will proclaim, not—
O me thy priest inspire!
For I to thee and thine immortal name,
In flowing numbers filled with sprite and flame,
Good, good, in flowing numbers filled with sprite and flame.'

[1] This foible is cleverly touched upon in the Epilogue: 'Are you advis'd what you do when you hiss? You blow away Horace's revenge: but if you set your hands and seals to this, Horace will write against it, and you may have more sport.'

[2] It will be remembered how in *The Faerie Queene*, bk. v. canto 3,—
'Braggadocio is uncas'd
In all the Ladies sights.'

champion of a clique who, though a *Dunciad* had been launched against them, were in the person of the author of *Satiromastix* represented by the reverse of a dunce[1].

Dekker was in too great a hurry, or his inventive powers were too inadequate to so unusual a demand upon them, to admit of his making more than an episode in a play out of his attack upon Ben Jonson. The plot into which he has introduced this episode is itself one which, if carefully developed, would have furnished occasion for situations of much tragic effect[2]. But he has treated it superficially and wholly without power, and has thus left unredeemed the absurd incongruity of combining a satirical picture of the 'Humorous Poet,' the Horace of *The Poetaster*, with a romantic story playing at the Court of William Rufus. Nor is the action of the play helped on by the low-comedy of the Welshman and the other lovers of the Widow Miniver. Least creditable of all is the wholesale plagiarism, from the very play which is to be ridiculed, of its best character, Captain Tucca, which moreover is spoilt in the stealing; for Dekker's Tucca is nothing but a coarse brute, whose sole endeavour is to outvie in filthiness of language the Tucca of Jonson. Moreover, a notable want of art is shown in putting satirical invective against Horace into Tucca's unsavoury mouth; for in *The Poetaster* the Captain had of course been treated as an ally of Horace's adversaries, and the vituperation of a Tucca should imply praise in disguise. Altogether the effort cannot, from a literary point of view, be pronounced successful; and of the popularity with which it seems to have met only the smallest part is to be attributed to its intrinsic merits.

Upon Jonson the result of the quarrel of which the *Satiromastix* marks the climax was, as has been seen, to divert his genius for a time from its most appropriate field. Dekker, on the other hand, in the next of his plays which has been preserved once more moves in his most proper sphere. The Britain of *Olde Fortunatus* had been as imaginary as its Cyprus; but in *The Honest Whore*, the next in date of the plays of which Dekker appears to have had no material assistance from any other author, we are brought face to face with the realities of London life. From a notice of Henslowe's, indeed, it would seem that Middleton had originally some connexion with this play, but *Part I* was printed in 1604 with Dekker's name only[1]; of *Part II* we possess no earlier impression than that of 1630. In this play, which to my mind has every mark of being essentially his, Dekker has treated with powerful simplicity the most terrible of the sins of a great city, and although I am by no means inclined to assign to *The Honest Whore*, from a literary point of view, the highest eminence among his dramatic works, the depth of its general conception and the broad effectiveness of its execution have justly caused this to be regarded as one of the most interesting productions of the popular Elisabethan drama. The play consists of two *Parts*; or rather, we have before us two plays, each possessing a plot of its own, but with the same leading characters, and one and the same moral. This moral it is as wholesome to enforce, as it is dangerous to attempt to paraphrase it in more or less allusive commonplaces. Dekker's age, whatever its vices and weaknesses, had not lost the power of holding up to them a true and uncompromising mirror; and it must be allowed that in *The Honest Whore* the main lesson of the action is brought home not merely with the utmost directness of speech, but also with unmistakeable integrity of purpose. Still, the plots of both *Parts* are rudely constructed, though

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[1] The absurd notion of Baudissin and W. Bernardi that Shakspere may have had a hand in *Satiromastix* is not worth refuting. See *Jahrbuch*, vol. xxvii (1892), p. 196.

[2] As Mr. Swinburne observes, 'the controversial part of the play is so utterly alien from the romantic that it is impossible to regard them as component factors of the same original plot.' Mr. Swinburne makes savage fun of the suggestion that the romantic portion is itself allegorical, William Rufus being intended for Shakspere, and Sir Vaughan ap Rees for Lyly.

The Honest Whore (*Part I* *pr.* 1604; *Part II* *pr.* 1630).

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[1] See *Henslowe's Diary*, p. 232 (1604), as to this play, called *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore;* and cf. Mr. Bullen's Introduction to his edition of Middleton's *Works*, p. xxvi, where it is pointed out that in his contemporary *Pageant* Dekker went out of his way to acknowledge a small contribution by Middleton, and would thus hardly have omitted his name from the title-page of this play, if he had been indebted to him for any substantial aid. Middleton may very possibly have added some touches to the comic scenes, and thereby eased the general progress of the play; but I cannot think with Mr. Fleay that he wrote much of it.

not devoid of perspicuity; and the execution is altogether of an almost unrelieved coarseness, while in the parallel scenes of the Bedlam in *Part I* and the Bridewell in *Part II* the realism passes the bounds of the bearable[1]. Considering the nature of the subject, the touches of pathos are surprisingly few[2]. Not that an Elisabethan dramatist could have been expected to treat such a theme in the spirit of a charity which effaces all things but a sense of brotherhood—but Dekker in this play seems to trust to the force of his rhetoric rather than to the strength of his situations, and indeed detracts from the very height of the interest in *Part II* by substituting a dialectical contest for what ought to have been an embodiment of a moral struggle. The comic underplot of the patient husband Candido is far from being pleasant enough to offer any relief to the harrowing character of the main action[3].

The Whore of Babylon (*pr.* 1607).

The extraordinary production entitled *The Whore of Babylon* was published in 1607 with Dekker's name only; nor is there any reason for supposing him to have had a coadjutor in this very crude dramatic expression of English Protestant sentiment[4]. The poetic merits of this play are very slender; but it furnishes a characteristic illustration of the extreme vigour of political feeling which at the time of its appearance must have continued to animate Englishmen against Rome and Spain. Without the endurance of this spirit, it would be difficult to account for the hasty workmanship of the piece, or for the contented acceptance by the public of so crude a treatment on the stage of great national events, at a time when the historical drama had already reached so advanced a developement. The play is a clumsy allegory of the overthrow of the Spanish Armada, and of the plots against the life of Elisabeth that had preceded it [1]—not one whit superior in execution to Bishop Bale's *Kyng Johan*. The notion of introducing Queen Elisabeth as 'Titania the Fairy Queen' was evidently borrowed by Dekker from Spenser's poem; and the name of the evil Satyran must doubtless have been derived from the same source. Nothing could be more ill-digested than this farrago of history and declamation; nor can it be described as anything but self-delusion in the author, that he should vehemently protest against his work being judged according to its presentment by the players, who spoil good plays as 'ill nurses spoil the children of a beautiful woman.' The play may have come down to us in an imperfect and mutilated form; but in any case it is with a pitiful sense of contrast that we turn from this counterpart in subject—but in subject only—to the Athenian poet's immortal dramatic treatment of the collapse of the earlier Great Armada. Passages of some spirit—'gleams of fugitive poetry,' in Mr. Swinburne's phrase—are not altogether absent from Dekker's play; but they occur side by side with the baldest of prose struggling into verse [2]; and the treatment as a whole is as feeble as the theme is mighty.

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[1] For the madhouse scene, cf. Fletcher's *The Pilgrim*, act iv. sc. 3.

[2] Among these may be mentioned sc. x of *Part I*, and the passage in *Part II*, noted by Charles Lamb, where poor Bellafront contrasts the picture of virgin purity with that of her own polluted past. Hazlitt has justly dwelt on the character of Bellafront's father, Orlando Friscobaldo, in *Part II*, as furnishing very great opportunities for an actor, and Mr. Swinburne too speaks of its 'genial passion and tender humour.'

[3] Langbaine points out that the grotesque 'fight for the breeches' in Part II has been 'exprest in verse' by Sir John Harrington in one of his epigrams printed at the end of his version of the *Orlando Furioso*.

[4] *The Double P. P.*, mentioned above, had been printed in the preceding year.

The oddly-named play, *If it be not good, the Divel is in*

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[1] Edmund Campian appears as Campeius, Dr. Parry as Parridel, &c.

[2] Among the former may be instanced the vigorous lines in honour of Drake:—

> 'Thus they give out, that you sent forth a *Drake*,
> Which from their rivers beat their water-fowl,
> Tore silver feathers from their fairest swans
> And plucked the Halcyons' wings that rove at sea,
> And made their wild-ducks under water dive,
> So long, that some never came up alive,' &c.

The eloquence of the following, on the contrary, resembles that of certain charity-sermons:—

> 'The standing camp of horsemen and of foot,
> These numbers fill. Lances 253. Horsemen 769.
> Footmen 22,000. The moving army, which attends on you,
> Is thus made up: of horsemen and foot, Lances 481.
> Light horsemen 1421. Footmen 34,050.'

The strength of the Armada has been previously catalogued in a similar fashion.

it (printed in 1612), seems to be entirely from Dekker's hand. The personage in question *is* in this comedy, and not only he, but before it comes to an end we are also introduced to several of the companions of his torments—among them to Ravaillac (whose deed of blood was still in men's memories), Guy Fawkes, and a 'Ghost, coal-black,' who states that he and all his brethren and sisters were 'smoakt out of their owne Countrie, and sent to Rotterdam,' and who is declared insupportable even by his adopted community. Such were the playful amenities by which the stage avenged itself upon its Puritan censors. Although in other respects of an ordinary type, this drama is remarkable as furnishing one of the most signal instances of an English play where an elaborate action starts from the notion of an infernal intervention and is carried out with the aid of infernal machinery. Its source is not, as Langbaine supposed, Machiavelli's celebrated *novella* on the marriage of Belphegor, although Dekker may have been acquainted with this satirical fancy, but, as Dr. Herford has incontrovertibly shown [1], the *Pleasant Historie of Friar Rush*, with which the English reading public had become familiar before the date of the production of Dekker's play [2]. The opening scene of a Lower Chamber, to which a Prologue designed by Goethe for his *Faust* [3], but afterwards discarded, would have furnished a parallel, is taken directly from the English version of the old Northern legend, as also are the convent scenes; but Dekker has added, apparently from his own invention, the doings of the emissaries of darkness at the Court of an Alphonso King of Naples, whom their wiles, after his reign had begun with intentions good enough to pave the very domicile so freely dealt with in this play, very nearly cause to end as a 'Neronist.'

If it be not good, the Devil is in it (*pr.* 1612).

With the addition of the tragi-comedy of *Match mee in London* [4] (printed 1631), which tells the story of Tormiella,

Match me in London (*pr.* 1631).

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[1] See his very full discussion of this play and its significance. *Studies*, &c., pp. 309–18.

[2] The English prose *History of Friar Rush* was entered in the Stationers' Registers in 1567–8, although no earlier edition is extant than that of 1620. See *ibid.* p. 303.

[3] See my edition of *Doctor Faustus* (3rd edn. 1892), *Introduction*, p. cxxxv, *note* 2.

[4] The meaning of the title is: 'Can even London be worse than this?'

The Wonder of a Kingdom (pr. 1636).

a citizen's chaste wife, pursued by a ruthless king, and of the comedy of *The Wonder of a Kingdome* (printed 1636), where a contrast is enforced between prodigality, as represented by Torrenti, 'the riotous lord,' and the munificence of a 'noble House-keeper,' Jacomo Gentili—the above-named make up the list of all the extant plays in which Dekker appears to have worked without a coadjutor.

Dekker's Pageants.

There is no necessity for returning to the *Device* for the reception of King James in London, composed by him and Jonson, Middleton contributing a speech to one of the sections written by Dekker, or to his civic pageants for the Mayoralties of the years 1612 and 1627–9.

Plays in which Dekker collaborated.

A considerable list remains of plays associated with Dekker's name, in which he was assisted by, or himself assisted, other writers. With regard to the majority of these productions, it would hardly be worth while to seek to determine the portions or passages contributed by himself and by his coadjutors respectively. By far the most interesting and attractive of these is *The Pleasant Comedie of Patient Grissil*, in the composition of which the author of *Olde Fortunatus* co-operated with Chettle and Haughton, and which has already been noticed among the works of the former [1]. Two of its lyrics have been confidently ascribed to Dekker, to whose fame as a singer they are, if his, signally contributory.

Patient Grissil (pr. 1603).

Various historical plays.

With Chettle and Drayton, Dekker also combined in the composition, at an early point in his career, of a chronicle history or historical play called *The Famous Wars of Henry the First and the Prince of Wales*, mentioned by Henslowe in 1598 [2]. In the same year, he is stated by the same authority to have had a hand with Chettle, Drayton, and Wilson in another historical play in Two Parts on the subject of

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The repeated allusions in this play to the old game at cards known as 'Maw,' have led Mr. Fleay to conclude that this was a revision of the old play mentioned in Henslowe (*Diary*, pp. 46 and 47, December 1594 and January 1595). *The Mawe* and *The Seat* (Set) *at Mawe* respectively.

[1] Cf. *ante*, vol. i. pp. 428–30. Dr. Grosart has reprinted this play in vol. v of his *Huth Library* edition of Dekker's Miscellaneous Works. A separate edition of it was published by G. Hübsch (Erlangen, 1893).

[2] *Diary*, p. 120. Possibly, as Collier suggested, this may have been the original of R. Davenport's *Henry the First and Henry the Second*, licensed in

Earl Godwin and his Three Sons[1], and with the same fellow-playwrights in another drama of the same kind in the murder of Richard II in prison with the connivance of his keeper, *Sir Piers Exton*[2]. Yet again in the same year. Dekker and Drayton are stated to have written the *First Part* of a play on *The Civil Wars in France*, to have been engaged on a Second Part, and to have had a Third in preparation[3]. Other joint plays of a historical and of a miscellaneous kind were written or begun by Dekker about this time with Drayton, Chettle, and Wilson. Among these, however, it is only worth while to name a *Troilus and Cressida*, by Dekker and Chettle (1599), which has been thought identical with the tragedy of *Agamemnon* referred to as theirs in the same year, and to which reference has already been made[4]. In the same year he was engaged with Ben Jonson and Chettle on a historical tragedy called *Robert the Second King of Scots*[5], and with Jonson alone on a domestic tragedy called *Page of Plymouth*, possibly merely the revision of an earlier play[6]. *The Spanish Moor's Tragedy*, by Dekker, Haughton, and Day, has been, on insufficient grounds, thought identifiable with the tragedy of *Lust's Dominion, or The Lascivious Queen*, printed as late as 1657 with the great name of Marlowe, in direct imitation of whose manner it was unmistakeably written. I can, however. perceive nothing in this play which there seems reason for assigning to Dekker individually[7]. The state-

The Spanish Moor's Tragedy (*acted* 1600).

1624, and attributed to him and Shakspere in the Stationers' Registers, *s. a.* 1653.

[1] *Diary*, pp. 121–2.

[2] *Ib.* p. 121.

[3] *Ib.* pp. 134, 137, 139.

[4] *Ante*, p. 147.

[5] See *Henslowe's Diary*, p. 156.

[6] See *ib.* pp. 105, 155.

[7] Cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 360. *Lust's Dominion*, certainly not by Marlowe, is printed in *Old Plays* (*Continuation of Dodsley*), vol. i, and in Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, vol. xiv. The entire conception, in this play, of the villain Eleazar very closely resembles that of Barabas in *The Jew of Malta*, and the fire of the opening recalls the most passionate of the great Elisabethans in his moments of rapture, while throughout the tragedy there is, as Mr. Fleay expresses it, 'an undercurrent of pre-Shakspearian work.' (See *English Drama*, vol. i. pp. 272–3, where the theory of the identity of *Lust's Dominion* and *The Spanish Moor's Tragedy* is maintained, and an attempt is made to allot the several portions of the play to Dekker, Haughton, and Day respectively.) Eleazar is, like Barabas, a diligent student of a book (act v. sc. 6), which can be no other than Machiavelli's, and the final curse

ment that he had been employed as early as 1597 to make certain 'adycyons' to *Doctor Faustus*, has been proved a forgery; and nothing but internal evidence—and this in my opinion of a doubtful kind—remains on which to ground the conclusion that Dekker had any concern with Marlowe's immortal work[1].

Dekker, Heywood, &c.'s Sir Thomas Wyat (pr. 1607).

In the new century Dekker was associated in the composition of plays with a further series of writers, including Thomas Heywood, Middleton, Webster, Massinger and Ford. Among these was *The Famous Historie of Sir Thomas Wyat*[2], printed in 1607, with the names of Dekker and Webster, a production in some respects recalling the spirit of Dekker's dramatisation of the catastrophe of the Armada, but incomparably less ambitious in treatment. We may however accept the conjecture of Dyce, which has been adopted both by Mr. Fleay and by Mr. Bullen, that in *Sir Thomas Wyat* we have nothing more than the mutilated abridgment of a play in two Parts on the subject of *Lady Jane* (Grey), of which Henslowe, under the date of 1602, mentions *Part I* as by Dekker, Chettle, (Wentworth) Smith, Webster, and Heywood, and *Part II* as by Dekker only[3]. Under these circumstances it suffices to remark that the pathetic element in the fate of the two

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with which he quits life recalls that uttered by Marlowe's baffled hero. The characters of the friars, Cole and Crab, seem to have been suggested by the same original. The versification, too, resembles Marlowe's, at least in the earlier part of the play. Altogether, the resemblances are all of a kind to be looked for in a copy. An incident worth noticing in *Lust's Dominion* is the introduction of 'Oberon and Fairies' to forewarn the heroine of her end (act iii. sc. 3). The subject of *Lust's Dominion* inevitably attracted the sympathies of Mrs. Aphra Behn; but as a matter of justice it must be conceded to her that in her *Abdelazer, or The Moor's Revenge* (1677), she has rather softened than intensified the passionate diction of her original. From *Abdelazer*, Young, in his turn, borrowed the outlines of his *Revenge* (1721); cf. Genest, vol. i. p. 216.

[1] See Mr. Fleay's *Appendix* (*A*) to the edition of *Doctor Faustus and Friar Bacon*, cited above, and cf. *ib., Introduction*, pp. cvii–cviii. One of the 'additions' which Mr. Fleay confidently ascribes to Dekker is the scene of the Seven Deadly Sins,—a tempting suggestion in view of Dekker's well-known tractate on the subject, one of his satirical pictures of London life, which, however, was not printed till 1606.

[2] This play has been edited, in company with Thomas Heywood's *The Troubles of Queen Elizabeth*, by Mr. J. Blew (1876).

[3] *Diary*, pp. 242, 243.

innocent victims of an ambition not their own (Guildford and Lady Jane Grey), is not lost sight of in this production, while its combination of authors were at the same time alive to the comic side of the national sentiment—hatred of Spain—typified by the hero of the re-christened piece [1].

Dekker and Webster's Westward Ho and Northward Ho (pr. 1607).

Webster was also associated with Dekker in the composition of two comedies, *Westward Hoe* and *Northward Hoe* (both printed 1607, but the former certainly written by 1605), over which I pass, though the kind of personages and the species of humour which they exhibit are thoroughly in consonance with Dekker's manner. They are extremely offensive pictures of the fashions of the City ladies, whom Dekker and his contemporaries loved to satirise, and who it appears, when in search of dissipation, were wont to take boat for Brentford or horse for Ware. How much of exaggeration there is in such pictures, which are almost on a level with the worst scenes ever represented on the English stage, it seems unnecessary to enquire [2]. In *The Roaring Girle* Middleton co-operated with Dekker, and apart from the fact that the name of the former is mentioned first on the title-page, the general character of the writing seems to point to his having had the principal share in it.

Middleton and Dekker's The Roaring Girl.

Massinger and Dekker's Virgin Martyr.

Dekker's name was also coupled with that of Massinger on the title-page of *The Virgin Martir* (printed 1622), and with those of Ford, Rowley, and an inviting '&c.' on that of

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[1] At least, the following dialogue strikes me as humorous:—

'*Bret.* Philip is a Spaniard, and what is a Spaniard?

Clown. A Spaniard is no Englishman, that I know.

Bret. Right; a Spaniard is a Camocho, a Callimancho, nay which is worse a Dondego, and what is a Dondego?

Clown. A Dondego is a kind of Spanish stock-fish or poor John.

Bret. No, a Dondego is a desperate Viliago, a very Castilian, God bless us.'

[2] *Northward Hoe* contains a passage (the account of Stourbridge Fair with the remark 'I could make an excellent description of it in a comedy') which might possibly be thought to have attracted the notice of Ben Jonson, whose *Bartholomew Fair* appeared in 1614. Dyce (who points out the allusion to *Westward Hoe* in the Prologue to Chapman and Marston's *Eastward Hoe*, printed in 1605), appears to me to judge too favourably of these two plays in describing them as 'though by no means pure,' yet 'comparatively little stained by that grossness from which none of our old comedies are entirely free.'

Ford, Dekker, and others' The Witch of Edmonton.

The Witch of Edmonton (printed 1658). In the former play, although there can be no doubt that Charles Lamb was right in assigning one of its most beautiful passages (the dialogue between Dorothea and her attendant angel in act ii. sc. 1) to Dekker, it has been customary to leave the main share to Massinger, among whose works it will be noticed below. In *The Witch of Edmonton* it requires I think no very nice eye to distinguish Ford's poetic touch and soft sentiment from Dekker's coarser hand; and as the scenes occupied with the Witch and the witchcraft constitute the least attractive part of the play, it may be reserved for notice among Ford's works. But Dekker very possibly helped to contrive and heighten the effect of many of the elements of terror and pity in this very powerful drama.

Dekker and Ford's The Sun's Darling (pr. 1656).

Lastly, Ford and Dekker also collaborated in the production of a 'moral masque,' called *The Sun's Darling* (printed 1656), which seems to have obtained great popularity. I should be inclined to follow the judgment of one who is himself a supreme master of the musical effect of verse in regarding the extant text of this masque as 'a recast by Ford of an earlier masque by Dekker,—probably, as Mr. Collier has suggested, his lost play of *Phaeton*[1].' It will therefore suffice here to call attention to the felicitous conception of this masque. Raybright the son and darling of Phoebus passes through the four seasons of the year, which allegorise the stages of life; and the moral is, that instead of following from first to last the dictates of 'Folly' and 'Human,' ever seeking for something new, man should endeavour to harmonise his life with the powers granted him by Heaven, and while reverencing Nature, honour the Power which makes him more enduring than her. Dekker and Ford co-operated in another masque, *The Fairy Knight*, licensed 1624 but not printed[2].

Dekker as a dramatist.

After the above enumeration it is unnecessary to appeal to the titles of any further lost plays, of which Dekker was either sole or part author, in order to show his prolific activity as a dramatist. Obvious as the remark may be, it is not the less true that his literary life illustrates the all but insuperable difficulty of combining rapid and constant production with lasting excellence. Moreover, his was no genius endowed by nature with the power of moulding its inspirations as it were unconsciously into fair poetic forms. Though his lyrical gifts were of a rare quality, though he was master of a vigorous if not elevated rhetoric[1], and though his natural humour, which shows itself at its height already in his earliest extant comedy, seems to have been constantly fed by lively observation, he produced no one dramatic work of a high order. It is in scattered scenes and passages rather than in the working out of characters or plots that he displays elements of real tragic power; for at times his pathos is singularly sudden and direct. A fuller measure of success he commands only within a limited sphere. Inside of this, although the grossness of his realism makes it impossible for a more refined age to dwell with unalloyed pleasure on his pictures of contemporary life, the unaffected healthiness of his spirit and the vigour of his comic genius are beyond dispute. What can I see, asks the son of Fortunatus, in mine own country? You may see, answers his interlocutor, 'things enough, for what can you see abroad that is not at home? The same Sun calls you up in the morning, and the same man in the Moon lights you to bed at night, our fields are as green as theirs in summer, and their frosts will nip us in winter. Our birds sing as sweetly and our women are as fair.' And though Dekker seems to prefer to dwell on aspects of his native land different from these, yet there is a healthy endeavour in him to take human nature at least as he finds it, and to reproduce his impressions and tell his truths with simple directness rather than seek for artificial

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[1] See Mr. Swinburne's Essay on Ford in *The Fortnightly Review*, July, 1871.

[2] Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. i. p. 232.

His healthiness and vigour.

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[1] Dekker's style was in truth very far removed from that commended by Chapman in a fine passage of his *Revenge of Bussy d'Ambois* (act i):

'Worthiest poets
Shun common and plebeian forms of speech,
Every illiberal . . . phrase
To clothe their matter: and together tie
Matter and form, with Art and decency.'

effects by attempting flights beyond his range. He is as homely in his moral teaching as he is downright in his exemplification of vice; but there is in him no affectation of being more than he is. His plays are among the most characteristic monuments of the ways of thought and feeling belonging to his age; and while generally rude in form,—alternating between prose, blank-verse, and rime (to which last he seems very prone),—they are for the most part full of genuine dramatic life, strong in their drawing of character, and spirited if uneven in their execution. A life of hard rubs with fortune well accords with a genius of rough but not unkindly vigour; and though much that Dekker has written may remain outside the range of what most of us can bring ourselves to enjoy, we shall gladly accord to him the recognition due to a writer possessed of a manly spirit and a genuine though limited dramatic power, as well as of a choice gift of song.

The names of Dekker and Marston are linked together, if not quite as fatally as those of Bavius and Maevius, by the unenviable tie of a community of conflict with a writer greater than either. But Jonson himself was careful to discriminate in his invectives against two adversaries, whose literary qualities mutually differ not less than appears to have been the case with the antecedents and circumstances of their literary careers.

John Marston (1576–1634).

Of JOHN MARSTON'S[1] personal life very little is known; and that little rests mainly on the supposition of his identity with one of the two namesakes mentioned by Anthony Wood. At the same time, there can be no doubt but that Wood went wrong as to the alternative adopted by him; and that the dramatist was the John Marston, who was born in 1576, and having in February, 1592, matriculated at Brasenose College, Oxford, was in the same month of the year 1594 admitted B.A. in that University as the 'eldest son of an esquire.' His father has been to all intents and purposes identified with John Marston of Coventry, a descendant of an old Shropshire family and at one time lecturer of the Middle Temple, whose wife was the daughter of an Italian surgeon settled in London[1]. The paternal descent thus brought home to Marston agrees, as Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps pointed out, with Jonson's allusion to the respectability of his antagonist's birth[2]. He seems to have been destined for his father's profession, the law; but a passage in the will of the latter shows the young man to have declined to be bent in that direction[3]. The John Marston of Coventry, of whom Wood speaks as married to the daughter of one William Wilkes, a Wiltshire rector and Chaplain to King James I, is again unmistakeably the same person as the poet; and the assumption tallies delectably with Ben Jonson's facetious statement to Drummond[4] that 'Marston wrott his Father-in-lawes preachings, and his Father-in-law his Commedies.' The dates of his literary productions, including his plays, extended, as will be seen, over a relatively small part of his life, the last of them, so far as we know, *viz.* the tragedy of *The Insatiate Countess*, being first printed in 1613. Three years later John Marston was presented to the living of Christ Church in Hampshire, which he resigned in 1631. A collective edition of his plays was published in 1633, which speaks of him as in the decline of his years, and living at a distance from London. Yet here he died on June 25, 1634, and was buried beneath the altar of the Temple Church—according to Wood, under a stone bearing the inscription '*Oblivioni Sacrum*[5].' Of this tomb no traces remain; on the other hand, he is described in the burial registers of the Temple Church as a minister; and in his will he calls himself 'clerk.'

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[1] *The Works of John Marston.* Edited by A. H. Bullen. [With an *Introduction* and *Notes.*] 3 vols, 1887.—*The Works of John Marston. With Notes, and some Account of his Life and Writings.* By J. O. Halliwell [-Phillipps]. 3 vols, 1856.—See also Fleay's *English Drama*, vol. ii, and Dr. E. Koeppel's *Quellen-Studien, &c.* (1895).

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[1] This Italian surgeon's widow married a land-owner at Wardington, near Cropredy, in Oxfordshire; and the dramatist's father thus acquired an interest in landed property in both places, which, according to his will, should have eventually descended to the eldest son.

[2] See *The Poetaster*, act iii. sc. 1: 'His father was a man of worship, I tell thee.'

[3] See the extract from the will, reprinted by Mr. Bullen from Dr. Grosart's edition of Marston's *Poems*, printed for private circulation (1879).

[4] *Conversations*, xii.

[5] Mr. Bullen, in the opening paragraph of his *Introduction*, notes the concurrence between the spirit of this epitaph and that of the powerful apostrophe *To Everlasting Oblivion* appended to *The Scourge of Villainy*.—The assertion of Forster, *Arrest of the Five Members, &c.*, p. 87, that 'Marston

His literary life and works.

The earliest of Marston's known literary productions was *The Metamorphosis of Pigmalion's Image, and certain Satyres*, published by him in 1598 with prefatory stanzas signed 'W. K.'—the initials of the mysterious *nom de plume* William Kinsayder[1], assumed by him in his second series of satires, published in the same year under the title of *The Scourge of Villainie.* Concerning these productions, it will be sufficient to say that *The Metamorphosis* has all the designed lubricity with none of the charm of its model *Venus and Adonis*[2], while the *Satires* at least equal those of Hall in their truculence, but fall far short of them in their wit. The ferocity of their invective is indeed repulsive, more especially as its fury indiscriminately lashes—in addition to the ordinary whipping-posts of 'Popelings' and Puritans—the enormities of social vice and the peccadilloes of literary rivals. Among these Hall, whose merits as a satirist are of a high order and whose literary excesses hardly deserved the same fate as those of Marston[3], seems to have been the first aggressor in his quarrel with that writer; but Marston repaid him with interest in one of the

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the dramatist' was the prisoner in the Gate-House who warned Lord Kimbolton of his impending arrest is of course untenable if he was the 'minister, sometimes of the Middle Temple, who died in 1634.'

[1] Cf. below, under *What you Will.* As to the supposed etymology of Marston's *nom de plume*, see Nares' *Glossary*, *s. v.* 'Kinsing.'—Marston is apostrophised as 'Monsieur Kinsayder' in *The Returne from Pernassus*, Part III, act i. sc. 2.

[2] It was accordingly suppressed by order of Whitgift and Bancroft, who exercised the censorship as Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop of London. In *Satire VI* of *The Scourge of Villainie* Marston makes what must be described as an unblushing attempt to represent his *Pygmalion* as written not 'in sad seriousness,' but by way of a protest against the lewd style of which it is an example. It must, however, be allowed that he had adumbrated this line of conduct in an *envoi* printed with the poem.

[3] His *Virgidemiae* were stayed by the Primate and the Bishop of London, and such copies as could be found were to be brought to the latter to be burnt. See Preface to Singer's edition of the *Satires by Joseph Hall* (1824), where Warton's excellent comparison between Hall and Marston as satirists is cited from his *History of English Poetry*, which treats both of them with great fulness.

Satires (iv) appended to *Pygmalion*, proclaiming him under the name of Grillus a

> 'Vain envious detractor from the good,'—

who has taken upon himself to rail against poets sacred and profane, ancient and modern, academical and lay, at 'Bartas' sweet *Semains*,' and (*credite, posteri!*)

> 'At Hopkins, Sternhold and the Scottish King.'

The quarrel was carried on in subsequent satires by both writers; but there is nothing so barren as such contentions, whether they belong to the Elisabethan or to the Augustan age. Marston rapidly achieved the literary notoriety which, notwithstanding his apostrophe to *Oblivion*, he must at least transitorily have coveted; for, in the year of the publication of his satires, Meres reckons him among the leading English authors in this species of composition; and both of his publications were speedily reprinted. But no livelihood was to be made by bringing such literary luxuries as these to the market; and already in September, 1599, we find Marston at work as a playwright, and receiving a small advance from Henslowe for a nameless play[1]. He is not again mentioned in the *Diary*. The earliest of the plays published with his name (*Antonio and Mellida*) appeared in 1602; it had probably been preceded on the stage by *Jack Drum's Entertainment*, which a strong *consensus* of opinion assigns to Marston. The latest—if *The Insatiate Countess* be accepted as his—was first published in 1613. Its predecessor, so far as we know, had been *What you Will*, first printed in 1607; but several of Marston's plays must have been produced on the stage later than this.

The last-mentioned drama, as will be seen below, shows Marston still in the midst of a violent literary controversy with his old enemy Hall; but to this adversary had previously been added another of a still more redoubtable kind. Nothing needs to be added here to what has been already said concerning Marston's conflicts with Ben Jonson[2].

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[1] *Diary*, p. 156. Henslowe's spelling is usually original; but in this instance he significantly mentions 'M^r^ maxton' as 'the new poete,' and a different hand has interlined the variant 'M^r^ Mastone.'

[2] *Ante*, pp. 307–8.

Whether or not they originated in the play of *Histriomastix* (as to which a few words below) must depend on the opinion we may form as to Marston having been its author, and as to the degree in which this comedy is held to answer to Jonson's assertion[1] that 'Marston represented him in the stage in his youth given to venerie.' There can be no doubt that Marston reflected upon some of Jonson's 'new-minted epithets' in the prose address prefixed by 'W. Kinsayder' to *The Scourge of Villainie*, and that whether or not he actually co-operated with Dekker in a dramatic reply to *The Poetaster*, he returned to the attack on his own account in *What you Will*. But their warfare must have subsided soon after the opening of the new reign; for in 1604 Marston dedicated his *Malcontent* to Jonson in flattering terms; and when in the same year he was, in consequence of the comedy of *Eastward Hoe* written by himself and Chapman, sent to prison in the company of his fellow-author, they were joined there by the magnanimous Ben, who had taken no part in the offence committed, but was in some way associated with the play containing the objectionable sentences, or with its production[2]. In 1605 some encomiastic verses by Marston were prefixed to Jonson's *Sejanus*. Whether or not Marston afterwards repented the reconciliation[3], it is certain that Jonson in his hours of expansion to Drummond during his visit to Hawthornden in 1618–9, gave vent to an abiding hatred of his old antagonist.

His entertainments.

Nothing further is known of Marston, except that, in addition to the dramas to be immediately noticed, he composed a city pageant on the occasion of the visit of King Christian IV of Denmark to King James I in 1606, of which the text, to the credit of Marston's academical scholarship, is in Latin verse; an entertainment for Lord and Lady Huntingdon's reception at Ashby in 1607 of her mother, the Countess Dowager of Derby; and, if it be his[1], a broadly humorous *quodlibet* of prose and verse called *The Mountebank's Masque*, first produced at Gray's Inn some time in the last years of Queen Elisabeth, and revived at the Court of King James in 1618. It would almost seem as if Marston's melancholy wish to be forgotten had co-operated in reducing our knowledge of his personal life to so meagre a record; if so, we may hope that there was more good in the unhappy man than tradition tells.

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[1] See *Conversations with Drummond, &c.*, xiii, where this is stated to have been the beginning of his quarrels with Marston.

[2] Cf. *ante*, p. 311.

[3] See below as to *Sophonisba*.

His tragedies: Antonio and Mellida (printed 1602).

Of the extant plays which are indisputably Marston's, the earliest is chiefly—and perhaps not without justice—remembered as having furnished Jonson with a ready supply of materials for the satire expended on it in his *Poetaster*[2]. The Crispinus of Jonson's play is denounced as both 'poetaster and plagiary.' It cannot, I think, be denied that several passages in *Antonio and Mellida*, and in its *Second Part* in particular, confute the propriety of the former of these appellations; and as to the correctness of the latter, the evidence at our command is insufficient. But while the fragments of true poetry in this tragedy are lost in the circumambient sea of rant, its general conception is conventional, although the convention which it followed in the most striking portion of its design was of a more or less recent date. The story of *Antonio and Mellida* (printed in 1602, but probably acted two years earlier) may have itself been taken direct from an Italian original[3]; but it is not of course on the strength of any such probability that the author is chargeable with plagiarism. The *Second* of the two *Parts* of which the play consists (though it extends to no great length as a whole) is one of those Revenge dramas of which the period of its production was signally prolific, and of which *The Spanish Tragedy* and the original *Hamlet* (whoever was its author) were the accepted, and probably the earliest, types[1]. Thus it is on the solution of the problem as to the relation between the First Quarto of *Hamlet* printed with Shakspere's name to the original *Hamlet*, that depends the answer to the comparatively unimportant question, whether Marston was, except in an incidental way, Shakspere's plagiary[2].

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[1] The authority is Collier's statement that Marston's name was pencilled on the title-page of a MS. of the masque, now lost. See his edition of it, *Shakespeare Society's Publications*, 1848.

[2] Act iii. sc. 2; act v. sc. 1; and cf. Gifford's notes. Chapman, in his *May-Day* (act iv), parodistically introduces a passage from *Antonio and Mellida*.

[3] Besides the numerous snatches of Italian, the designation of *Nutriche* consistently given to the Nurse may be thought to favour this supposition.

Part I.

Of the two *Parts* of *Antonio and Mellida*, the *First* is far from skilful in construction. It brings, however, to a happy ending 'the comic crosses of true love,' with which, as the hero observes at the close, its action has been concerned. The true love in question is that of Antonio, son of Andrugio Duke of Genoa, and Mellida, daughter of Piero Duke of Venice. After a dull Induction, in which the chief characters present themselves to the audience, 'with parts in their hands, having cloaks cast over their apparel,' the action opens with a vigorous rush *in medias res*. Andrugio having been utterly routed by Piero, and the Doge having set a price on the heads of the Genoese, both father and son, Antonio, in order to seek out his mistress, assumes the disguise of an Amazon, in which he appears at Piero's Court[3]. Mellida escapes in the habit of a page, but is retaken by her father. Finally, Andrugio, after meeting his son only in order to behold him apparently fall dead at the tidings of Mellida's capture, offers himself as a victim to the Duke of Venice, when to all seeming Piero relents and the complication is brought to a happy end.

Part II: Antonio's Revenge.

But the *Second Part*, which is called *Antonio's Revenge*, is appropriately prefaced by a Prologue praised by Charles Lamb 'for its passionate earnestness, and for the tragic note of preparation which it sounds.' Of a sudden we find ourselves in the midst of a dense jungle of crimes. Duke Piero reveals himself with startling abruptness as a thorough-paced villain, entering 'unbraced, his armes bare, smeared in blood, a poniard in one hand bloody, and a torch in the other[1].' He has slain a former lover of his daughter, and orders the corpse to be placed by her side, so as to convict her of unfaithfulness to Antonio, whose father Andrugio he has likewise despatched. Having, as he observes, 'no reason to be reasonable,' he further plots the death and dishonour of Antonio, besides securing for himself the hand and affections of Antonio's mother, Andrugio's widow Maria. Mellida falls a victim to the tyrant's devices, and Antonio prepares for revenge. To this he is further incited by his father's ghost, as well as by those of other victims of Piero; and in order to conceal his intentions he assumes the habit of a fool. The action, helped on by a dumb show and the ghost's announcement of a grand alliance of the Italian Powers against the tyrant, now reaches its climax; and the 'poor orphan,' as he is repeatedly called, duly achieves his revenge.

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[1] Cf. *ante*, pp. 158 *seqq.*, and vol. i. p. 307; and see Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. ii. pp. 75-6.

[2] I do not think that, notwithstanding editors and critics, the striking resemblances to *Hamlet* in act iii of *Part II* can be ignored. Cf. Koeppel, p. 21.—I will not insist upon other possible reminiscences; but that Rossaline in *Part I* is a copy—conscious or unconscious—of Shakspere's Beatrice will, I think, hardly be gainsaid.—The scene with the Painter (*Part I*, act v. sc. 1) may be fairly set down as a parody on the 'addition' to *The Spanish Tragedy* attributed to Jonson (cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 305).

[3] Koeppel, *u. s.*, suggests that this may be a reminiscence of the similar disguise of Pyrocles in Sidney's *Arcadia*.

This outline will suffice to show to what kind of dramas *Antonio and Mellida* properly belongs. The comic scenes are ambitious, but feeble; Rossaline, unmistakeably a copy, is at the same time a very poor one; Balurdo, 'a wealthy mountebanking burgomasco's heir[2],' and the rest of the courtiers are barely amusing. The style, although rising occasionally into impassioned force, is full of affectations and absurdities. Latin quotations as well as passages in

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[1] These are the opening lines, phrases in which are ridiculed by Ben Jonson:

'The rawish dank of clumsy winter ramps
The fluent summer's vein; and drizling sleet
Chilleth the wan bleak cheek of the numb'd earth,
Whilst snarling gusts nibble the juiceless leaves,
From the nak'd shudd'ring branch; and pills the skin
From off the soft and delicate aspects.
O now, methinks, a sullen tragic scene
Would suite the time with pleasing congruence.
May we be happy in our weake devoir,' &c.

[2] In act v of Part I, by the way, Balurdo gives a more direct imitation of Lyly than I remember to have noticed in any similar satirical reproduction of the euphuistic manner.

Italian[1] abound; and the author runs riot in his diction as well as in his sentiments. Extravagance, in a word, is the dominant element in the oppressive atmosphere of this tragedy[2].

The Wonder of Women, or Sophonisba (printed 1606).

The Wonder of Women, or The Trajedie of Sophonisba (printed 1606) presents itself with that modesty—or assumption of modesty—which Marston seems to have taken a peculiar pleasure in exhibiting. Notwithstanding the opinion of weighty authorities to the contrary, it seems difficult not to suppose the address 'to the General Reader,' which disclaims any special endeavour on the part of the author 'to transcribe authors, quote authorities, and translate Latine prose Orations into English blank verse' to imply a sneer against Jonson, who had done all these things in his *Sejanus*. Marston in *Sophonisba* certainly proceeds on a system considerably easier to both reader and author. This tragedy is merely one of the many dramatic versions of a story well adapted to dramatic treatment[3], without any original elements of a nature to add to its interest. Marston has dealt with it in the realistic spirit habitual to his age[1], and has added a grotesque episode —that of the witch Erictho, borrowed from Lucan[2]. Rant serves in lieu of passion, and a peculiarly ample supply of commonplace reflexions (apparently italicised for the reader's benefit) moralises the drama's course. The whole production is second-rate in both design and execution.

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[1] See especially act iv of *Part I*.—The '*Vindicta, vindicta!*' in Fletcher's *Fair Maid of the Inn* may be intended in ridicule either of *Antonio's Revenge* or of *Locrine*, in both of which the exclamation occurs.

[2] Among the far-fetched allusions in which it delights, the reference to '*Pythagorean axioms*' (*Part II*, act iii. sc. 3) may perhaps pass, and the Nurse's quotation from *Aristotle's Problems* (*ib.* sc. 4) is taken from a popular chapbook (see Halliwell-Phillipps' note, vol. i. p. 301). But how absurdly Antonio, 'in his sea gown running,' pauses to give the audience 'an instance' of a metaphysical observation, though the instance is very charmingly expressed:

> 'As having clasp'd a rose
> Within my palm, the rose being ta'en away,
> My hand retains a little breath of sweet:
> So may man's trunk, his spirit slipp'd away,
> Hold still a faint perfume of his sweet guest.'
> (*Part I*, act iv.)

That the inevitable Machiavelli does not escape without mention need hardly be observed (see *Part II*, act iv. sc. 1).—Of the rant the reader may be spared instances; but it may be noted that Marston's bombast is far less sustained in character than Marlowe's or Kyd's. Occasionally such passages occur as this (*Part II*, act iv. sc. 3):

> (*Piero*) 'I'll conquer Rome,
> Pop out the light of bright religion,
> And then, helter skelter, all cocksure.'

Cf. Antonio's description of the tempest on the sea, *Part I*, act i.

[3] It may be supposed to have been treated in *Cipio Africanus*, acted at

The Insatiate Countess (*pr.* 1613).

The remarkable tragedy of *The Insatiate Countess* was printed with Marston's name in 1613 and in 1631, but it is not included in the collected edition of his plays printed in 1633. A copy of the play, dated 1616, exists which bears no name on the title-page, and in another, dated 1631, the name of 'William Barksteed' is given as that of the author. This must be William Barksted, the author of two poems entitled respectively *Mirrha, the Mother of Adonis, or Lust's Prodigies* (1607), and *Hiren, or The Faire Greeke* (1611), in the former of which occur two beautiful lines also to be found in *The Insatiate Countess*. There is, however, nothing further to suggest that he was the writer of the play[3]. The

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Whitehall in 1580 (cf. vol. i. p. 208). Of later tragedies on the subject of Sophonisba, Lee's and Thomson's will be briefly noticed below.—Koeppel, p. 25 note, cites an essay by A. Andrae (Leipzig and Oppeln, 1891) on the treatment of the subject of Sophonisba in French and other literatures, where mention is made of a Spanish drama, *Los Amantes de Cartago*, which resembles Marston's in several respects, but is of uncertain date.

[1] The *ne plus ultra* of realistic description is reached in Erictho's account of the ruined temple (act iv. sc. 1). But the whole proceedings of Syphax are as grossly painted as they could be, without the picture being powerful even as one of purely bestial passion.

[2] See *Pharsal.*, bk. vi.

[3] The poems have been edited by Dr. Grosart and printed for the subscribers (1876), with an Introduction reproducing what is known as to William Barksted, 'one of the Servants of His Majesty's revels,' as late as 1615-6, chiefly from Collier's *Memoirs of Edward Alleyn* (*Shakespeare Society's Publications*, 1841). *Mirrha* is a version of the Ovidian story, afterwards dramatised by Alfieri, possessing considerable poetic power, and worthy of ranking not far from *The Rape of Lucrece*; the revolting character of the story is softened by Mirrha's passion being represented as a divinely-imposed infatuation. *Hiren* is a poem of much less significance, but, notwithstanding its tremendous catastrophe, by no means without impressiveness. Neither poem, however, can be said to show dramatic gifts in the author. Dr. Grosart's suggestion that the reference to *The Turkish Mahomet and Hiren the Fair Greek* in *The Merrie Conceited Jests of George Peele* is to this poem, and has only by a slip of the pen been made to apply to a play, seems hazardous; nor can I think it very easy to interpret the passage except as indicating Peele's authorship.

doubts as to its authorship to which these circumstances have given rise are enhanced by the conclusion, from which few will be likely to dissent, that it is superior both in tragic effectiveness and in beauty of diction to any of his other dramatic productions. Less impressive in this direction are the 'Shakesperean echos' perceptible in this play, as in other dramatic work of Marston's. Whether the solution of the problem be that Barksted completed an unfinished piece of Marston's [1], or that he compounded this tragedy out of a tragedy and a comedy by that author [2], I am not prepared to determine.

Such characters as Isabella, the chief personage of this interesting tragedy, have probably existed, and the type is familiar, in a literary way, to readers of Tacitus and Gibbon. Moreover, the age in which this play was produced was unhappily signalised by the shamelessness of some of its most prominent women, as well as of their co-mates in infamy. Yet the presentment of such a figure as a work of the imagination is a sin against gods and men, whatever it may be to the theatre and the booksellers. Marston seems to have modelled the experiences of his Isabella very closely on *The disordered Lyfe of the Countess of Celant, &c.*, narrated in Paynter's *Palace of Pleasure*, following Belleforest's version of one of Bandello's tales [3]. Yet, notwithstanding her literary pedigree, a moral monstrosity like this Isabella as ill befits literary treatment as a physical monstrosity suits reproduction by the sculptor's or the painter's art. A generation ago it would have been difficult to point out a more horrible creation than this Insatiate Countess in imaginative literature,—unless it had been the would-be mistress of Victor Hugo's *L'homme qui rit.* Nor is the comparison forced; for the play is, like the powerful romance of the great French writer, although perhaps not in the same degree, a composition of remarkable brilliancy. Two scenes in it, depicting respectively the beginning of Isabella's career of vice, exhibit a high dramatic force. In the later, the man whom the woman has wedded on the death of her first husband appears in the 'friar's weeds' which he had assumed after being deserted by her, in order to bid farewell to her on the scaffold. At last he awakens in her a movement of repentance; and thus, after the executioner has bid her veil her sinful eyes, she dies [1]. We wonder that the author should have allowed himself to weaken the awful effect of this scene by bringing to a laborious close, after instead of before it, the complications of his bye-plot—such as it is. A beautiful simile, whether original or borrowed, in the closing speech cannot reconcile us to the inadequate close of this remarkable play [2].

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[1] See Bullen's *Introduction*, p. li.

[2] See Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. ii. p. 80.

[3] Cf. Koeppel, *u. s.*, p. 30.

Marston's Comedies: Marston and Webster's The Malcontent (pr. 1604).

The remainder of Marston's extant plays are comedies. *The Malcontent* (printed 1604, with the dedication to Jonson already referred to, but probably acted three years earlier [3]) was republished in the year of its first impression with 'additions' due in part to Webster. It is not, however, known which of these additions were his handiwork, except that his name was attached to the *Induction*, which introduces Burbadge and other actors, but is otherwise commonplace. We have accordingly no warrant for refusing to Marston the credit of any of the most striking passages in this play, which seems to me almost unapproached by his other productions in its occasional condensed vigour of expression, however greatly we may be tempted to attribute some at least among them to Webster. And there is at all events one example of truly powerful writing not forming part of the additions, and thus undoubtedly the property of Marston, which illustrates the difficulty of trusting too implicitly to instinct in seeking to discriminate between the touch or manner of different poets[1].

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[1] '*Exec.* Madame, I must entreat you, blind your eyes.
Isa. I have lived too long in darkness, my friend;
And yet mine eyes, with their majestic light,
Have got new muses in a poet's sprite.
They have been more gazed at than the god of day;
Their brightness never could be flattered;
Yet thou command'st a fixed cloud of lawn
To eclipse eternally these minutes of light.
What else?
Exec. Now, madame, all 's done,
And when you please, I'll execute my office.'

We seem to trace something of Webster here.

[2] The lines in question are those recurring in Barksted's *Mirrha*:
'Night, like a masque, is enter'd heaven's great hall
With thousand torches ushering the way.'

A finely-expressed thought in an earlier scene of the same act—
'Divines and dying men may talk of hell,
But in my heart the several torments dwell'—

recalls similar passages in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* (cf. vol. i. p. 334).

[3] Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. ii. p. 78.

The hero of this comedy is Giovanni Altofronto, sometime Duke of Genoa, who, having been deprived of his throne, under the assumed name of Malevole gains the confidence of the usurper by a misanthropical frankness, not to say brutality, of speech, and is thereby enabled to hasten and countermine at the same time the designs of Mendoza, the minion of the usurper's Duchess. The villainous Mendoza, who has sought to crown his imagined triumph by capturing the hand of the rightful Duke's supposed widow, is thus in the end overthrown; and the weak Pietro gladly resigns his honours to his preserver. The plot, which winds through a variety of other complications, ends very effectively by the performance of a masque wherein all the conspirators against Mendoza appear, and his seizure by them. But he is spared by Malevole-Altofronto, who in a concluding speech of considerable originality dismisses all the chief characters with appropriate verbal passports.

There is, as already remarked, a degree of vigour in this play beyond what is usual with Marston; its action proceeds with effective rapidity; and the diction is characterised by force, and frequently by an epigrammatic pointedness[2]. The

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[1] See Malevole's speech, act iii. sc. 1, beginning 'I cannot sleep.' In the same scene there is a reminiscence of *Hamlet* ('Illo, ho, ho, ho! Art there, old truepenny?').

[2] '*Cel.* How stands Mendoza—how is 't with him?

Mal. Faith, like a pair of snuffers—snibs filth in other men, and retains it in itself.' (Act iii. sc. 3.)

Or again (act iii. sc. 4):

'*Men.* When we are duke, I'll make thee some great man, sure.

Mal. Nay, make me some rich knave, and I'll make myself some great man.'

Nor is the definition by Bilioso, the comic diplomatist among the *dramatis* wit of this comedy would appear to have caused an endeavour to seek in many of its passages a 'private sense,' against which the author protests in a curious 'imperfect Ode, being but one stave spoken by the *Prologue*'; it is therefore needless to seek any reference, such as might be easily suspected, to the Court of James in the five lines spoken by Malevole in the last scene. In the character of Malevole himself Marston might have found an opportunity for producing a masterpiece; but he can hardly be said, even with Webster's assistance, to have achieved any noteworthy success of the kind; and his Malevole sinks into unreality by the side of Shaksperean figures with which it has elements in common, by the side above all of a Timon or of a Prospero. Indeed, as a character the feeble Pietro, the usurper, seems to me to be more strikingly true to nature; though the conception of the relation between Malevole and the personages on whom he works may be in itself psychologically correct.

Parasitaster, or the Fawn (*pr.* 1606).

Parasitaster, or The Fawne (printed 1606) is in subject a kind of complement to *The Malcontent*. Duke Hercules of Ferrara (a historical personage, though he is no doubt quite arbitrarily connected with the story of the plot[1]) has sent his son Tiberio, hitherto averse from marriage, to the Court of Urbino, to woo the Princess Dulcimel in his father's name. Duke Hercules himself, in order to watch the conduct of his son and generally to gratify his own humour for a change, assumes the disguise of Faunus, a parasite. By his adroit flattery of everybody with whom he comes into contact, and especially of Duke Gonzago of Urbino, himself 'a weak Lord of a self-admiring wisdom,' he renders himself a general favourite. But the character of the Fawn

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personae, of a principle of ecclesiastical government familiar to the seventeenth century, unworthy of quotation:

'*Mal.* What religion will you be of now?

Bil. Of the duke's religion, when I know what it is.'

[1] It has been found in the 3rd Tale of the IIIrd Day of the *Decamerone*. See Koeppel, p. 27. Both Koeppel and Fleay have noticed resemblances to *Measure for Measure*; the former also directs attention to the repeated allusion to the *Ship of Fools*; at the close of the play the Fawn sentences the 'mummers and false seemers' to this college of folly for ever.

exercises little or no influence upon the course of the action, in which there is nothing out of the ordinary. Tiberio of course falls in love himself when he ought to be merely acting as a proxy; and Dulcimel, who returns, or indeed anticipates, his passion, contrives with genuine female adroitness to make her father, who strongly objects to Tiberio's passion, himself serve as an instrument in the advancement of her amours. The play is not unentertaining, but the blandishments of the Fawn are devoid of any element distinguishing them from the commonplace arts of a parasite; and what little humour of character the piece possesses is to be sought in the impotent self-conceit of Duke Gonzago. The bye-plot between Don Zuccone and his wife Donna Zoya may have entertained the audience; any severe criticism from the reader the author, with his usual professions of modesty, expressly deprecates. 'Comedies,' he says, 'are writ to be spoken, not read'; and such enjoyment as can be derived from a work like *The Fawne* springs from its excellence as an 'acting' play. Marston was happier in choice of subjects than in execution; but he knew the taste of his audience, and had the dramatic insight which recognises the supreme importance of what he truly describes as 'the life of these things,' *viz.* action.

The Dutch Courtezan (*pr.* 1605).

The Dutch Courtezan (printed 1605) is, again, a comedy of indisputable merit. Its plot, the general purport of which is very aptly summarised by the author, and which seems to owe sundry of its ingredients to the same source as the *Insatiate Countess*[1], centres on a contrast which our own generation seems by no means to have exhausted as a theme of dramatic action; but there is a degree of harshness in its presentment which offends finer feeling. Yet the play brings its sound teaching home; and there is considerable psychological force in the character of Malheureux, at first the self-righteous counsellor of a thoughtless but well-intentioned friend, and afterwards himself the victim of an evil passion, from which he is only rescued by a daring device. The two sisters, Beatrice and Crispinella, who vaguely resemble the fair cousins in *Much Ado about Nothing*[1], are drawn very effectively, and in the bearing of Beatrice when she learns the death of her betrothed there is much true feeling[2]. Little Crispinella, though even less choice in her language than Shakspere's Beatrice, must be allowed to take rank as one of the most sparkling figures of Elisabethan comedy, and in adequate hands would prove a source of genuine delight to any theatrical audience[3]. The bye-plot partakes of the broadest farce, being made up of the practical jokes and knaveries of Cocledemoy, described in the *dramatis personae* as 'a knavishly witty City companion,'—a genuine type of the heroes of the 'jests' which passed for wit in the Elisabethan age. The victims of his fancy are Mr. and Mrs. Mulligrub, a vintner and his wife, who mingle the savour of the tavern with that of the tabernacle. The satire against Puritanism is however slight in kind, although dictated by a contemptuous dislike of demonstrative Protestantism in general which Marston consistently combined with defiance of Popery[4]. Mulligrub's 'last words,' when he believes himself on his way to the gallows, are an admirable summary of an 'honest tradesman's' way of setting his house in order[1].

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[1] *Viz.* Paynter's *Palace of Pleasure*, both as to the main plot, and as to the practices of Cocledemoy. See Koeppel, pp. 28-9. The '*Fabulae Argumentum*' runs as follows: 'The difference betwixt the love of a courtesan and a wife is the full scope of the play, which, intermixed with the deceits of a witty city jester, fills up the comedy.'

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[1] For another resemblance to the same Shaksperean comedy see the scene (act iv. sc. 1) with the watch, who after putting the wrong man in the stocks, depart with the following ejaculation on the part of their leader: 'Let's remember our duties, and let['s] go sleep, in the fear of God.' But this was a favourite comic motive. (Cf. *ante*, p. 134.)

[2] Act iv. sc. 1.

[3] In such hands, for instance, as those of an actress in whose beginnings the keen eye of Dickens (see Mr. Forster's *Life*) traced an exceptional promise, and whose maturer efforts were the delight of our own generation. How inimitably Marie Wilton (if we may still venture so to call her) would have pointed Crispinella's periphrastic acceptance of her suitor (who has just been lamenting her disdainfulness, consequent upon reading *Euphues* and other fashionable books): 'Nay, as for that, think on 't as you will, but God 's my record,—and my sister knows I have taken drink and slept upon 't,—that if ever I marry, it shall be you; and I will marry, and yet I hope I do not say it shall be you neither.'

[4] From a passage in act iii. sc. 1 it would appear that already at this early date a technical force belonged to the epithet *methodical*, which word Mrs. Mulligrub says she got from 'Sir Aminadab Ruth.' Southey (*Life of Wesley*, vol. i. p. 42, note) adverts to the employment of the name *Methodist* by Calamy, the most eminent member of the Smectymnuus group.

Though the eponymous personage in this comedy is as revolting as are several of its scenes, it is in general written with singular lightness. Devoid neither of humour nor of pathos, and containing a considerable amount of genuine wit, while at the same time skilfully and lucidly constructed, *The Dutch Courtesan* deserves to be ranked among Marston's happiest efforts, and contributes not a little to justify a dramatic reputation on the whole most unequally sustained.

What You Will (*pr.* 1607).

What You Will (printed 1607) possesses a certain literary interest, but is otherwise an ordinary comedy of intrigue. The 'error' on which its main interest centres is one with which we have already met in other plays; the plot accordingly bears a general family likeness to the design of the *Amphitruo.* But the secondary intention of this 'slight-writ' play was to furnish the author with an opportunity for attacking a personal adversary. So much is manifest from the Induction, which in Jonsonian fashion brings on the stage three literary critics, Atticus, Doricus, and Phylomuse, as well as from the play itself. But the artifices of the invective are more difficult to unravel than the procedures of the master of such fence and guard, the author of the *Dunciad* himself; perhaps, as Mr. Fleay suggests[2], the confusion may have been aggravated by the alteration of the play for performance at Court. In a scene (act ii. sc. 1) which cannot here be examined in detail, Marston evidently attacks Jonson as Quadratus, but it is not so clear who is meant by Lampatho Doria, addressed by Quadratus as 'Don Kinsader,' but hardly to be conceived as intended for an effort of self-satire[3]. The obscurities in which the controversial purposes of this play seem designedly enveloped are, however, not worth the trouble of profounder study.

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[1] 'I do here make my confession: if I owe any man any thing, I do heartily forgive him; if any man owe me any thing, let him pay my wife.' When he is rescued, he exclaims, 'I could even weep for joy'; to which his wife adds, 'I could weep too, but God knows for what.' (Act v. sc. 1.)

[2] *English Drama*, vol. ii. p. 77.

[3] When Quadratus refers to possible well-judged attacks upon himself by 'discreet Mastigophoros' and 'acute Canaidus,' the allusion must be to the authors of *Satiromastix*, and the temptation is strong to regard 'Canaidus' as a *lapsus calami* for 'Anaides' (cf. *ante*, p. 357).

With the addition of the admirable comedy of *Eastward Ho*, written conjointly (but in what proportions is not known) by Chapman and Marston, with some assistance from Jonson[1], the above exhaust the list of extant plays known to have been written by Marston.

Plays attributed to Marston.

To him have, however, also been ascribed two other plays, the authorship of neither of which, if established, would add appreciably to his reputation, but which possess, in different ways, a certain interest as bearing upon those controversies between the dramatists of his age among whom he took up so conspicuous a position[2]. The earlier of these, *Histriomastix, or The Player Whipt*, is not known to have been printed before 1610, but as its title is facetiously cited in *Every Man out of his Humour*[3], it must have been produced on the stage in or before 1599. Marston's hand cannot be traced in this play with certainty, but there is a great resemblance in many passages of it to his style, and the character of Crysoganus seems intended for Jonson. If so, the latter may be supposed to have taken his revenge in the fustian-talking Clove of *Every Man out of his Humour*. These conjectures of the late Mr. Simpson have a reasonable probability in their favour; but when he comes to identify Posthaste, the 'poet' of a beggarly set of strollers, with Shakspere, we feel that Marston deserves to be protected against the imputation involved, and are constrained to demur altogether to the supposed aptness of the caricature[4]. I have already expressed the opinion, that though the allusion in the line of the burlesque speech of Troylus,

Histriomastix, or The Player Whipt (acted by 1599; pr. 1610).

—'when he shakes his furious Speare'—

can hardly be explained save in one way, it seems out of the question that Shakspere's tragi-comedy was the play ridiculed in this episode[1].

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[1] See *ante*, pp. 442 *seqq.*

[2] Both are printed, with full Introductions, and some valuable notes, in vol. ii of the late Mr. Richard Simpson's *School of Shakspere* (1878).

[3] Act iii. sc. 1, at the end of the 'fustian' speech by Clove, in whose phraseology Mr. Fleay has traced reminiscences both of *Histriomastix* and of *The Scourge of Villainie*.

[4] See Mr. Simpson's note, p. 89, on the *Characteristics of Post-hast.*

The main action of the play is an allegorical treatment—in the fashion of the old moralities—of the familiar conception[2] that peace breeds prosperity, and prosperity in its turn vices leading to strife and its concomitant evils, whereof in the end peace is bred once more. The conclusion seems inevitable, and is borne out by much in the outward form of the piece, that the *Histriomastix* of 1599 is only an altered or enlarged version of a play of earlier date.

Jack Drum's Entertainment (*pr.* 1601).

Jacke Drum's Entertainment, or The Comedie of Pasquil and Katherine (first printed in 1601, and satisfactorily traced in its origin to the same year by internal evidence) is a play of intrinsically slight interest. Its principal title applies to a Falstaffian adventure of its principal comic personage, a proverbial phrase of unknown origin[3] to which his appellation must have been intended to correspond. The characters and intrigues of which the play and its action are made up are alike of a hackneyed sort, and the attempt to find an intention of personal satire in either seems to me preposterous. On the other hand, there is no gainsaying the research which has shown the vocabulary discharged by the Crispinus of the *Poetaster* to correspond with remarkable closeness to that of this play; so that, if Marston, as seems probable, was the culprit in the episode of Jonson's comedy, he must at least have had a hand in *Jack Drum's Entertainment*[4].

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[1] Cf. *ante*, pp. 176–7. I cannot help pointing out the coincidence of the changes rung in this scene on the sound of the word 'ingle' in the sentence: 'Then we shall have rare ingling at the prodigall child.' The play with which a 'Troilus and Cressida' fragment is so oddly mixed up has no concern with Ingelend's *Disobedient Child* (cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 250), but the writer may have had the collocation in his head.

[2] Mr. Simpson, pp. 87–8, has traced the fancy through both French and English writers of the sixteenth century.

[3] See Nares' *Glossary*, *s.v.* '*Drum, Tom* or *John Drum's Entertainment.*' The phrase, which occurs in both forms in *All's Well that Ends Well*, act iii. sc. 6 (with a subsidiary allusion, of course, to Parolles' drum), implies something different from 'dining with Duke Humphrey'; or rather, it emphasises the kicks without referring to the absence of halfpence or of their equivalent.

[4] Cf. *ante*, p. 358, and *ib.*, *note* 2.

Marston's achievements as a dramatist.

The loss of any further plays which Marston may have written, or in which he may have been concerned—whether or not his productivity as a playwright came to an end twoscore years before his death—is unlikely to have prejudiced his claims to a higher rank than seems assignable to him in the history of our dramatic literature. It was his misfortune by his earliest tragedy not only to have furnished an opportunity for merited ridicule to his chief adversary among writers for the Elisabethan stage, but also to have lent colour to the charges brought by his foremost rival in a different form of satire against that stage at large[1]. The blood and thunder which in Marston's *Antonio and Mellida* recall Marlowe and Kyd are enveloped in a bombast of terms as 'astounding' as theirs; and in his two remaining tragedies, though he has learnt to moderate the extravagance of his phraseology, his imagination seems still intent upon themes belonging to the reign of the morally grotesque. He is equally ambitious in comedy; for both *The Malcontent* and *The Fawn* aim at an unusual degree of originality in the conception of their main characters and situations; but in the former—in which Marston's work had the advantage of Webster's additions—he can only be said to have achieved a partial success, and in the latter he has from a literary point of view fallen short of it altogether. He is happier in a less ambitious kind of comedy, of which *The Dutch Courtesan* is in many respects a most praiseworthy example; while with regard to *Eastward Hoe* it is impossible to say in what degree the credit of this admirable play is attributable to him, and in what to Chapman. The literary satire of *What You Will* and of the plays in which Marston's co-operation seems traceable is necessarily in part obscure, but it cannot be held to rise above the level—no high one in itself—of his *Satyres* proper.

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[1] See Hall's *Satires*, i. 1, 3, 4. The author of *The Returne from Pernassus* is extremely severe on the extravagances of Marston's diction:

'Methinks he is a ruffian in his style;
Withouten bands' or garters' ornament,
He quaffs a cup of Frenchman's helicon,
Then royster doyster in his oily terms,
Cuts, thrusts, and foins at whomsoe'er he meets,
And shews about Ram-alley meditations.
. . . .
Aye, there is one that backs a paper steed
And manageth a pen-knife gallantly;
Strikes his poinado at a button's breadth,
Brings the great battering-ram of terms to towns,
And at first volley of his cannon shot
Batters the walls of the old fusty world.'

The affectation, as well as the violence, of Marston's style is hit off in this satire quite as effectively as it is exposed in Jonson's more elaborate attack.

His lack of self-dependence.

Either Marston was painfully aware of the limits of his powers, or the warning example in a contrary direction furnished by his adversary Jonson determined him to adopt a deprecatory attitude towards the public. But the iteration with which he assures the spectators of his 'constant modesty,' of his 'modest diffidence and selfe-mistrust,' and of his freedom from self-admiration, and confesses the 'slightness' of his productions, will affect some minds more disagreeably than the self-assertion of Ben Jonson. There is something of the molluscous Crispinus of the *Poetaster* in these appeals to a magnanimous public; and it is difficult not to interpret them as signs that Marston felt himself unable to command success without these conciliatory flourishes. A further symptom of the same self-distrust is his unmistakeable addiction to the practice of borrowing—a habit which in literature as well as in other spheres is more easily acquired than shaken off. Shakspere in particular shines through the seams of most of Marston's plays. His literary ambition was manifestly very great; and opposition vexed him to the quick. But though his ambition was sustained by many acquirements, and by the powers of occasional pathos and fluent humour, while at times he could rise to poetic beauty of expression, yet there is a false ring about most of his efforts, and a want of sustained force in nearly all. He sought to excel in various dramatic species, but can hardly be said to have reached excellence unless in the depiction of the abnormal excesses of contemporary manners; and even here he fails in concentration of effect. Thus I remain in doubt whether on the whole he deserves to be ranked among the great

His chief merits and defects.

dramatists, with whose names his own is habitually associated, as having like them adorned our dramatic literature with creations of original genius.

Thomas Middleton (1570 *c.*–1627).

THOMAS MIDDLETON[1] was born about 1570, and was the son of a gentleman settled in London, whose wife likewise sprang from a London family[2]. It is highly probable that he was at one time a member of one of the Universities,—Cambridge as it would seem, to whose life and ways he frequently refers in his plays with the easy but not unconscious familiarity of the old University man[3]. He may safely be identified with one of the two Thomas Middletons who were admitted to Gray's Inn in 1593 and 1596 respectively,—with the former of these for choice. Thus he passed through the social experiences habitual to young gentlemen of his day before settling down to the labours of his life; and, apart from the evidence of his portrait[4], it will, I think, be allowed that his dramatic works are, notwithstanding their frequent coarseness, distinguished by a general flavour of good-breeding from those of such authors as Jonson, Dekker, or Marston. Of the non-dramatic works which have been ascribed to Middleton and are extant, none can be said to be demonstrably his; nor is there anything very noteworthy about any one of them. Indeed, his authorship of either of the two works in verse has been distinctly denied by Mr. Swinburne, who is not apt to deceive himself in such matters. The interminable poem in six-line stanzas, entitled *The Wisdom of*

Non-dramatic works ascribed to him in verse;

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[1] *The Works of Thomas Middleton, with some Account of the Author, and Notes.* By the Rev. A. Dyce. 5 vols., 1840.—*The Works of Thomas Middleton* (with Introduction and Notes). Edited by A. H. Bullen. 8 vols., 1885. This has now become the standard edition of the poet.—*The Best Plays of Thomas Middleton.* Edited by Havelock Ellis, with an Introduction by A. C. Swinburne. 1887.—Art. *Middleton, Thomas*, by Dr. C. H. Herford, in vol. xxxvii of *The Dictionary of National Biography*, 1894. Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. ii. pp. 85–107, treats of Middleton in conjunction with William Rowley.

[2] See the pedigree *ap.* Dyce and Bullen.

[3] See *e.g. A Chaste Maid in Cheapside.*

[4] See the attractive etching reproduced in Mr. Bullen's edition from the woodcut prefixed to *Two New Plays* (1657): '*Vera effigies Tho. Middletoni, Gent.*'

Solomon Paraphrased, was, however, published with his name in 1597; and unless the other Thomas Middleton is to be saddled with the responsibility for it, we must suppose the future dramatist to have brought it up with him from Cambridge to Gray's Inn[1]. *Micro-cynicon, Six Snarling Satyres*, was printed in 1599, the initials '*T. M. Gent.*' being attached to the lines called, in imitation of Hall, *His Defiance to Envy*, by which this very commonplace effort in satirical vituperation is prefaced.

and in prose.

Among the prose-writings ascribed to Middleton, *Father Hubburd's Tales* and *The Blacke Booke* both appeared in 1604, with prefatory addresses bearing his initials. The former, which bears the sub-title of *The Ant and the Nightingale*, and in which verse is intermixed with the prose, displays some fancy in its conception and much vivacity in its execution, taking us, not very differently from Spenser's satire, out of the realm of allegory into the midst of contemporary life. *The Blacke Booke*, suggested by Nashe's *Pierce Pennilesse*, is supposed to be written by Pierce's infernal correspondent, and contains 'Lawrence Lucifer's' last will and testament. Both pieces are full of allusions to the London of the day, whose theatrical amusements are not forgotten, and in neither case is there any apparent reason for contesting the supposition of the authorship of Middleton[2], with whose comedies they come into contact in several particulars. The same cannot be averred of a pamphlet rhetorically describing Sir Robert Sherley's embassy to Poland (1600), or of the solemn admonition *ad populum* entitled *The Peace-maker, or Great Britain's Blessing* (1618), which has been very rashly attributed to the pen of King James I himself. Both publications were plainly catchpennies for the times; the latter being designed to enforce the futile royal policy of mediation just before the outbreak of the most general of European wars, the former, more vaguely, to stimulate the feeble growth of English interest in a still more remote region of affairs. Middleton, however, may very well have lent his hand to such endeavours; his lost *Annales* and *Farrago* seem to have been collections of the journalistic sort in which he was led to engage by the general bent of his mind, as well as by the nature of the official employment of his later years.

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[1] It is printed in his concluding volume by Mr. Bullen, whom its 'acres,' I regret to say, incite to violent language, which might have been excused on the part of Essex, to whom it was dedicated, if he took it with him to the Azores.

[2] Mr. Fleay, however, pronounces that they were written by Thomas Moffat or Moffett, a Cambridge-bred physician of remarkable scientific and literary activity.

His activity as a writer of plays, masques, and pageants.

His career as a dramatist had, however, begun not much later than his attempt to gain a reputation for literary labours of a more select sort. He is not mentioned by Henslowe before 1602[1]; but it has been thought indisputable that *The Old Law* was acted as early as 1599[2], although he could not then have been assisted in it by either of the writers whose names were associated with his in the first printed edition of the play (1656). Within the first decade of the new century he had become a popular writer for the stage, collaborating at times with Dekker and others. From 1613 onwards he was employed in the composition of city pageants and cognate entertainments, the first two of these being, by coincidence or otherwise, composed in the honour of namesakes of his own[3]. In 1614 he wrote a masque, called *The Mask of Cupid*, of which significantly enough no traces remain, in honour of the Earl of Somerset's ill-omened marriage to Lady Frances Howard. In 1616 he wrote part at least of a city pageant on the occasion of Prince Charles' assumption of the title of Prince of Wales; and he continued to be occasionally employed in the same direction by the Court, which conceivably made use of his services for a different kind of purpose[1]. In any case, he had by 1620 made himself so useful and acceptable to the authorities of the City of London as to be appointed in that year its Chronologer, and at the same time Inventor of its 'honourable entertainments'; for the former office—like certain other royal and academical offices of this and subsequent periods—united functions calling for the inspiration of more than one of the muses[2]. Thus he continued to compose pageants for Lord Mayor's Day, while at the same time employing his versatile pen, as already mentioned, upon the *Annals* of the City. The last City entertainment prepared by him bears the date of 1626; he died in the following year, and was succeeded in his office by Ben Jonson. Middleton's widow (he had been married twice) seems to have sought and obtained some pecuniary aid from the City authorities.

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[1] *Diary*, pp. 227 and 228, in connexion with his play of *Randall Earl of Chester*. In the same year he appears again as having composed a Prologue and Epilogue to Greene's *Friar Bacon*.

[2] In act iii. sc. 1 one of the personages in the play, on the authority of a 'parish-chronicle,' states another personage to have been '*born in an.* 1540, and now 'tis 99.'

[3] Viz. *The Triumphe of Truth*, on the entrance upon the Lord-Mayoralty of Sir Thomas, and *The Entertainment at the Opening of the New River*, the achievement of Sir Hugh, Middleton (both 1613). Mr. Fleay 'guesses that the new Mayor was the dramatist's godfather.'—It has already (*ante*, p. 466) been noted that in 1604 Middleton had made a contribution to Dekker's Entertainment to the King in his passage through the City in 1604.

Middleton as a dramatic politician.

Three years before Middleton's death occurred the most remarkable incident in his career as a dramatist,—an incident which also possesses considerable significance for the history of the English stage in general. In 1624 he produced at the Globe Theatre his comedy of *A Game at Chess*, which after being performed nine days in succession was prohibited by royal mandate, both the author and the actors being summoned before the Privy Council. In this 'very scandalous comedy,' as Secretary Conway had informed the Privy Council in a letter dated August 12, 1624, the players had been guilty of 'the boldness and presumption, in a rude and dishonourable fashion, to represent on the stage the persons of his Majesty' (King James I), 'the King of Spain, the Conde de Gondomar, the Bishop of Spalato,' &c. The Spanish ambassador had complained of this public insult; and appealing to the 'commandment and restraint given against the representing of any modern Christian King in those stage-plays,' the Secretary had, in the King's name, directed the necessary proceedings to be taken by the Privy Council. This was accordingly done. The principal actors appeared before the Council, and on examination 'confidently protested' that they had 'added or varied nothing at all' from the book of the play, which had been 'seen and allowed' in the regular course by the Master of the Revels. They were, notwithstanding, summarily prohibited from performing either the obnoxious play, or 'any play or interlude whatsoever until his Majesty's pleasure be further known'; and had to bind themselves in '300^{li} bondes' to attend to this prohibition, and to appear before the Board when summoned. But a few days afterwards the general prohibition was taken off, his Majesty conceiving 'the punishment if not satisfactory for that their insolency, yet such as since it stopps the current of their poore livelyhood and mainteanance without much prejudice they cannot longer undergoe.' The obnoxious play itself, however, was 'not onely antiquated and silenced, but the Players' were 'bound as formerly they weare, and in that point onely never to act it again.'

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[1] See above as to *The Peace-maker*.

[2] The offices of historiographer-royal and poet-laureate to the Sovereign were formerly associated; and there used to be an unwritten understanding that the Professor of Modern History at Cambridge should on occasion act as the *ex officio* poet of the University.

Meanwhile, Middleton himself having contrived to 'shift out of the way,' his son Edward was brought before the Council on August 30, 1624, but dismissed with an injunction 'to attend the board till he be discharged by order of their Lordships.' There seems no reason for crediting the story that Middleton in person suffered imprisonment for his authorship of this comedy, and that he was released on sending a humorous rimed petition to the King. As has been suggested by Collier, 'the reason why no punishment was inflicted upon either the players or the poet, was perhaps that they had acted the piece under the authority of the Master of the Revels[1].' At the same time—especially as the Master of the Revels continued to perform the duties of his office as before—it may be surmised that the lenient treatment experienced by the offenders in this instance is to be accounted for by an unwillingness to affront public opinion by severely punishing the production of a play so thoroughly in consonance with the prevailing current, to which the King himself had bowed,—more especially, perhaps, as its author seems to have been well liked at Court[1]. The *Game of Chess*, as will be seen from the brief account given of it below, was a vigorous satire not only against the Spanish ambassador, but also against the Spanish marriage from which the nation was rejoicing that the Prince of Wales had escaped, and against Spain and Rome in general, which had never been more hated in England than at this moment. And, as is well observed at the conclusion of the most complete narrative of this historical episode, when the Spanish match was at an end, James had ceased to rule[2]. War had been declared against Spain in March; and the man to whom the public rupture was attributed, the 'White Duke' of Middleton's play,—Buckingham,—seemed omnipotent. Thus Middleton came forth unharmed from one of the most audacious adventures recorded in the annals of the English theatre.

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[1] Collier, vol. i. p. 430. For the documents quoted see Dyce's and Bullen's *Introductions*: and cf. as to the appearance of Edward Middleton before the Council, *T. Middleton's Game at Chess*, by J. Hornby, in *Shakespeare Society's Papers* (*Old Shakespeare Society's Publications*, 1845). Collier observes that we have no other information as to the 'commandment' against representing the person of a modern Christian King on the stage referred to in the Secretary's letter. (See below, ch. viii; and cf. *ante*, p. 422.) That the actors were fairly frightened appears from an allusion in

Middleton's reputation before and after death.

Of Middleton's relations to his more eminent literary contemporaries we know little or nothing; except that Jonson in the *Conversations* set him down as 'a base fellow,' while Thomas Heywood mentions him, without any special tribute of praise, among the well-known playwrights of the age[3]. Webster, with whom he does not

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the Prologue to Fletcher's *Rule a Wife and have a Wife* (acted in the same year 1624):

'Do not your looks let fall,
Nor to remembrance our late errors call,
Because this day we're Spaniards all again
The story of our play, and our scene Spain:
The errors, too, do not for this cause hate;
Now we present their wit, and not their state.'

[1] His entertainment *Civitatis Amor* was presented at Court on Prince Charles being created Prince of Wales in 1616; his attractive Court masque of *The World Tost at Tennis* dates from 1620.

[2] See Gardiner's *History of England, &c.* (edn. 1883), vol. v. p. 160.

[3] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 471.

appear to have collaborated, and between whose genius and his own there lay a wide gulf, in an enumeration of dramatists of note passes him by altogether[1]. He was, however, associated as a writer of plays, with various writers, from Dekker to Fletcher; and with one of these, William Rowley, his co-operation was so frequent that, in the opinion of one eminent historian of our drama[2], 'to treat them separately would be the next worst thing to treating Beaumont apart from Fletcher.' Three at least of his plays[3] were re-introduced to the stage after the Restoration; that he has, however, on the whole remained a stranger to it since his own age may be accounted for by his having been happiest as an author in a branch of dramatic literature which, more distinctly than any other, addresses itself in the first instance to the attention of the particular period whose manners it depicts and satirises. Most assuredly, however, he was possessed of merits calling for a fuller record and more liberal tribute than has until recently fallen to his lot.

His plays.

So much uncertainty attaches to the dates of many of Middleton's plays, that they may as a whole be most conveniently classed without any pretence of adhering to strict chronological order. Exclusively of the masques and pageants, they fall most naturally into two groups, into which, however, it would be pedantry to attempt to divide the whole of this prolific author's extant dramatic works. Thus the play which I may proceed to notice first, since it is obviously of a very early date in its author's career, connects itself in treatment with a less advanced period of our dramatic literature than that of which Middleton may in general be said to be one of the representatives.

The Mayor of Quinborough (*pr.* 1661).

The condition in which *The Mayor of Quinborough* (Queenborough) has come down to us strongly inclines us to subscribe to the hero's malediction of 'your new additions: they spoil all the plays that ever they come in; the old way had no such roguery in it[1].' A production which combines an allusion to 'Oliver the Puritan[2]' with traces of a very antique kind of historic drama—dumbshows and a presenter[3]—has obviously been revised 'up to date'; but it is perhaps hardly worth while to enquire how far Middleton's handiwork was supplemented by that of others in the edition (of 1661) which has come down to us. Although the play contains a reference to the comedy of *The Wild-Goose Chase* (which was produced about 1621), the date of its original composition must fall in an early period of Middleton's labours as a dramatist[4]. It follows the manner of the Chronicle Histories, though exhibiting far greater ease and freedom of diction than these; its subject is the mythical history of the conquest of Kent by Hengist and 'Horsus,' with Uther Pendragon, Vortiger and Vortimer, 'Roxena' and the rest of them; while the comic figure is the tanner Simon, the mayor of Queenborough, who is cozened by a company of pretended comedians while looking on at what he takes to be a play. The enumeration of plays suited for popular consumption, whether their names be real or imaginary, in this scene[5], which is no stranger to a familiar one in *Hamlet*, will not be overlooked; but as a whole the piece, though containing some fine passages, calls for no special notice.

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[1] See the address prefixed to *Vittoria Corombona*.

[2] Mr. Fleay, *u. s.*, p. 90.—I much regret that Miss P. G. Wiggin's *Inquiry into the Authorship of the Middleton-Rowley Plays* (*Radcliffe College Monographs*, No. 9. Boston, 1897), the sole careful investigation of the subject extant, should have only reached me as these sheets were passing through the press.

[3] *The Mayor of Quinborough; The Changeling; No Wit, no Help like a Woman's.*

Romantic comedies:

A considerable number of plays, of which the authorship was entirely or in part Middleton's, belong to that mixed species to which in his age the names of tragedy or comedy were assigned in reference rather to the ending of the plot than to the general character of the action. In their essence they belong to a species of the drama where incident or intrigue constitutes the main subject of interest, and to which the designation of romantic comedy may be with more or less of precision applied.

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[1] Act v. sc. 1.

[2] *Ib.*

[3] 'Raynulph Higden, Monk of Chester, as Chorus.' The author of the *Polychronicon* corresponds to Gower in *Pericles*, which play Middleton's tragedy naturally recalls to Dyce. It contains other Shaksperean reminiscences, among them a notable one (act iv. sc. 3) of *The Tempest*, unless with Mr. Bullen we reverse the relation, and suppose Shakspere to have imitated and improved) a splendid figure.

[4] Mr. Fleay conjectures this play to have been an alteration of *Henges* Hengist), mentioned in *Henslowe's Diary*, p. 89, under the year 1597; and this again to have been identical with Valteger (Vortigern), mentioned repeatedly *ib.*, pp. 76, *seqq.* But such suggestions are only worth noticing as illustrative of the indefatigable ingenuity of their author.

[5] Act v. sc. 1.

The Old Law (acted 1599 *prob.*, *pr.* 1656).

To this group belongs Middleton's earliest extant comedy, *The Old Law*, which, as already noted, the evidence of a passage in the play seems to assign to the year 1599, and which in subject as well as in occasional details savours of the student. The names of Massinger and William Rowley are associated with Middleton's on the title-page of the very corrupt impression of 1656; but Rowley was probably at the time not far advanced in his teens, and Massinger's additions may safely be referred to a later date. The play is a romantic comedy on a sufficiently extravagant theme; but the subject being once held dramatically admissible, the execution must be described as both facile and felicitous. 'Evander, duke of Epire' has promulgated a law ordaining that all old men living to the age of fourscore years, and all women to that of threescore, are to be cut off as useless members of the commonwealth. With the exception of one dutiful son and his wife, who hide their aged father till he is discovered by the wiles of a female hypocrite to whom they have revealed their secret, this law is universally welcomed and put into execution with extreme eagerness. In the end it appears that the good Duke has merely intended to test the virtue of his subjects; the supposed victims of the law are made to sit in judgment on its supporters; and a new law is proclaimed which decrees that no son and heir shall be held 'capable of his inheritance at the age of one and twenty, unless he be at that time as mature in obedience, manners and goodness,' and that no wife who has designed her husband's death shall be allowed to marry for ten years after it has taken place. This highly humorous conception is carried out with much spirit; and abundant incidental fun is made of a speculative gentleman (Gnotho) who attempts to cut short his wife's period of existence by bribing a clerk to make a trifling change in the register of her birth, and then freely offers 'two to one' on his next matrimonial venture[1].

Altogether, this comedy leaves a most pleasing impression upon the reader, due both to its comic power and to occasional passages of no little tenderness of feeling. No advantage, however, is taken of the subject to attempt the deeper kind of satire for which it might have furnished an occasion, but which would have hardly suited the author's conception of his theme[2].

Blurt, Master Constable (pr. 1602).

Blurt, Master-Constable[3], *or The Spaniard's Night-walke*, although it was printed in 1602 without Middleton's name, bears the obvious traces of his light and vivacious style. The comedy begins pleasantly, and indeed prettily—due allowance being made for the kind of raillery in stage wit-combats affected by ladies of the post-Euphuistic period—with the sudden passion of Violetta, a Venetian maiden, for Fontinelle, a French prisoner brought home from the wars by her adorer. But the progress of the action is marred by a fatal obscurity of plot, which seems largely due to the omission of a scene in the third act, where the hero's escape from prison must have been contrived with the aid of the 'zany' of the courtesan to whom Violetta's lover and brother wish to marry him. Ultimately Fontinelle is followed into the courtesan's house, where he has been received with open arms, by Violetta, whom he has secretly married—as in the course of the *dénoûment* she asserts, in accordance with a plan concerted between them. But although the resemblance between Violetta's device and that of Helena in *All's Well that Ends Well* may be imperfect, I cannot think that the dramatist intended to represent Fontinelle as really faithful to his young wife, or to furnish in her final speech a really truthful account of his conduct[1]. A surprising amount of humour is scattered through the dialogue of this piece; the humours of the polite world at Venice, and of the *demi-monde* in particular, are depicted with great spirit, while the Spaniard, Lazarillo, who delivers a lecture to Imperia's establishment on the text-book of the *Economical Cornucopia*, is by no means a mere copy of Don Adriano de Armado[2]. Blurt, the Master-Constable, with his attendant Slubber, may be remembered among the many counterparts to Dogberry and Verges[3], but their share in the action is inconsiderable. The play contains two or three lyrics, of which one is worth rescuing from its ribald surroundings[4].

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[1] Indeed, he is ready to bet on any subject. Thus he stakes five drachmas on the correctness of a quotation ('we have Siren here' he quotes from the old play of 'Siren the fair Greek,' as he insists the name was; cf. *ante*, p. 374); and offers the Duke 'two to one with your grace of that' in the very face of the tribunal which is to 'censure' his iniquity.—Mr. Bullen, who pronounces the conclusion of *The Old Law* 'the drollest of all drolleries,' gives the credit of the fun to William Rowley, but perceives even here traces of the hand of Middleton, to whom, as he thinks, 'probably belong all the serious parts of the play.'

[2] The passage (act i. sc. 1) in which the old wife determines to die with her husband recalls Burns' charming lyric:

> 'Tis fit that you and I, being man and wife,
> Should walk together arm in arm.'

For a 'deeper kind of satire' an opportunity was lost of dwelling on the love of life in the old men—a theme treated with so terrible a force by Swift.

[3] The title of this play is shown by Dyce to be a proverbial phrase equivalent to 'A fig for the chief constable!' In Fletcher's *Love's Cure* (act iii. sc. 1) the villainous Alguazier is addressed as 'Don Blirt.'

The Phoenix (*pr.* 1607).

The comedy of *The Phoenix*, printed 1607, is said to be founded on a Spanish novel, *The Force of Love*; but, from whatever source the plot be taken, it is a highly ingenious one, and well, although rather lengthily, carried out. Prince Phoenix, being sent on his travels by his aged father to prepare himself for the duties of the throne, prefers to travel at home, and to study in disguise the evils which it will be his province as a sovereign to remove. (We have therefore here a new version of the old Haroun Alraschid device, used by Shakspere, to whom Middleton's debts are innumerable[1].) He succeeds both in discovering a mass of iniquity, and ultimately in bringing it to justice before the Duke. The cluster of evil-doers includes a personage in the habit of gratifying his passion for law-suits by inveigling simple countrymen into the hands of attorneys, who in return feed him with money for carrying on his own causes; and a justice of the peace, who in addition to criminal designs of his own, keeps thieves as his servants and makes a mockery of his tribunal; besides wickedly dissolute courtiers, a jeweller's wife and the usual miserable Knight whom she supplies with her husband's money, and a treacherous politician who has engaged the disguised Prince to take part in a plot against the life of his father. The whole play forms a social satire of some power—especially in the passages directed against the abuse of the law—and in two speeches of the Prince reveals true elevation of moral sentiment[2].

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[1] The parenthesis in Fontinelle's speech, act v. sc. 2 '(O pure Italian flower!),' admits of more than one interpretation.—On the other hand, if Violetta had extenuated nothing in her *apologia*, act v. sc. 3, why should Fontinelle 'blush' at her demonstration of his affection towards her, and why should he confess himself no pattern of constancy, while he proclaims her 'a noble conqueror'? I owe Mr. Bullen many thanks for the extreme courtesy of his censure (*Introduction*, pp. xxi-xxiii); but although in the previous edition of this book I gave an unsatisfactory account of the plot of this play, I confess that his correction leaves me still unable to see through it clearly.

[2] His 'chickness' and 'chittizens' must have been taken over from his prototype. ('Quare *chirrah*, non *sirrah*,' asks Holofernes.)

[3] See especially act i. sc. 2, and act iv. sc. 3: '*Blurt* . . . I am, in the duke's name, to charge you with despicious of felony; and burglary is committed this night; and we are to reprehend any that we think faulty.'

[4] See act ii. sc. 2:

'Love is like a lamb, and love is like a lion;
Fly from love, he fights; fight, then does he fly on;
Love is all a fire, and yet is ever freezing;
Love is much in winning, yet is more in leesing [*i.e.* losing];
Love is ever sick, and yet is never dying;
Love is ever true, and yet is ever lying;
Love does doat in liking, and is mad in loathing;
Love indeed is anything, yet indeed is nothing.'

The Witch.

We have no knowledge as to the date of the 'Tragi-Coomodie, called *The Witch*,' unnoticed by the critics till the year 1770, when it was printed from a unique MS. (now in the Bodleian), where it was stated to have been 'long since acted by his Majesty's servants at the Blackfriars.' This circumstance is peculiarly unfortunate, inasmuch as the chief interest which this play possesses lies in its relation to Shakspere's *Macbeth*. The plot is a tissue, not worth the unravelling, of intrigues, the most important of these being taken, and very much marred in the taking, from the well-known story of the revenge of Rosamond upon Alboin, related in Machiavelli's *History of Florence*, but probably known to Middleton through Belleforest[1]. The main question of interest with regard to this play is whether the machinery of the witches was borrowed by Middleton from Shakspere, or *vice versâ*. A fierce conflict has been waged on the subject, but cannot be said to have arrived at a very definite issue,—and this for two reasons, *viz.* that the date of *The Witch* is altogether unknown, while the date of *Macbeth* is by no means certain. If, however, the general character of *The Witch* makes against the supposition that it was one of Middleton's earlier plays, and if, as there seems good reason to conclude, the date of *Macbeth* is not to be placed later than shortly after the accession of James I[2], this diminishes the external probability of Shakspere having been the borrower. There would of course be nothing in itself unlikely or disquieting in the assumption. It was well observed by a German scholar, in the course of an enquiry into the genesis of a modern work of genius, that resemblances which critics of one kind are only too ready to describe as 'reminiscences,' a more thoughtful criticism prefers to regard as illustrations of the historical developement of an artistic motive. Even supposing Shakspere's play to have followed Middleton's, the group of the witches in *Macbeth* and the action assigned to them could not be appropriately described as a 'reminiscence' of the witches of Middleton, although this term might be correctly applied to a few phrases and passages[3]. Charles Lamb has in so masterly a manner expressed the difference between the witches of Shakspere and those of Middleton, that nothing remains to be added to his words[1]. In the present instance, however, there is really no necessity for assuming any direct appropriation on the part of either dramatist from the other. The text of *Macbeth* is admittedly most imperfect and corrupt, and, considering the nature of the passages which the two plays have in common, the case seems to be met by the simple solution which satisfies Mr. Swinburne, viz. that 'the players who mangled Shakespeare were the plunderers who pilfered Middleton[2].'

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[1] The late Mr. R. L. Stevenson, in his singularly attractive satirical romance *Prince Otto*, contrived to give a new turn even to this familiar notion.

[2] *Viz.* that beginning—

'Thou angel sent amongst us, sober Law,'

(act i. sc. 4), and that in praise of 'Reverend and honourable Matrimony' (act ii. sc. 2), which, as Dyce points out, bears a remarkable resemblance to the famous passage in bk. iv. of *Paradise Lost* (bk. iv. vv. 750 *seqq.*).

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[1] Sir William D'Avenant's *Albovine*, founded on the same subject, was first printed in 1629. (Cf. *infra.*)

[2] See *ante*, pp. 170-1. A passage in *Blurt, Master-Constable* (act iii. sc. 1), printed in 1602, which looks like a recollection of a famous passage in *Macbeth*, can hardly be allowed to contradict the probability of the conclusion there indicated:

'the owl, whose voice
Shrieks like the belman in the lover's ears.'

[3] These will be easily identified by comparing with the well-known scenes in *Macbeth*, act i. sc. 2, act iii. sc. 3, and in particular act v. sc. 2 of *The Witch*.

Passages from the last two of these scenes were inserted by D'Avenant in his altered *Macbeth* (1674), and were accordingly long attributed to him. In the *Macbeth* music attributed to Matthew Lock the words are all taken from *The Witch*. The supposition (favoured by Mr. Aldis Wright) that Middleton interpolated a number of passages in Shakspere's play, is of course to be kept distinct from either of the suppositions adverted to in the text; but it seems unnecessary.

[1] 'Though some resemblance may be traced between the charms in *Macbeth* and the Incantations in this Play, which is supposed to have preceded it, this coincidence will not detract much from the originality of Shakspeare. His witches are distinguished from the witches of Middleton by essential differences. These are creatures to whom man or woman plotting some dire mischief might resort for occasional consultation. Those originate deeds of blood, and begin bad impulses to men. From the moment that their eyes first meet with Macbeth's, he is spell-bound. That meeting sways his destiny. He can never break the fascination. These witches can hurt the body: those have power over the soul.—Hecate in Middleton has a son, a low buffoon: the hags of Shakspeare have neither child of their own, nor seem to be descended from any parent. They are foul Anomalies, of whom we know not whence they are sprung, nor whether they have beginning or ending. As they are without human passions, so they seem to be without human relations. They come with thunder and lightning, and vanish to airy music. This is all we know of them.—Except Hecate, they have no names; which heightens their mysteriousness. Their names, and some of the properties, which Middleton has given to his hags, excite smiles. The Weird Sisters are serious things. Their presence cannot co-exist with mirth. But in a lesser degree, the Witches of Middleton are fine creations. Their power too is, in some measure, over the mind. They raise jars, jealousies, strifes, *like a thick scurf o'er life.*' *Specimens*, p. 152.—Cf. *The Witch*, act i. sc. 2:

> '*Hecate.* Well may we raise jars,
> Jealousies, strifes, and heart-burning disagreements,
> Like a thick scurf o'er life, as did our master
> Upon that patient miracle' [*i. e.* Job]; 'but the whole world
> Our power cannot disjoint.'

[2] *Introduction*, *u. s.*, p. xxvii.—Cf. *ante*, p. 173, and see Mr. Bullen's *Introduction*, pp. lii–lviii.

The chief source to which Middleton had recourse for the details of his witchcraft was Reginald Scot's *Discouerie of Witchcraft* (1584); the names of the imps he appears to have taken from a rather earlier publication[1].

More Dissemblers besides Women (*pr.* 1657; *acted* 1622-3).

More Dissemblers besides Women, not printed till 1657, but certainly written by 1622, is a comedy of intrigue, with a plot not infelicitously devised. The Lord Cardinal of Milan, a worthy prelate[2] gifted with an eloquence of an extremely unctious kind, takes comfort in his old age from his belief in two seeming paragons of self-denial—the Duchess of Milan as holding in undivided affection the memory of her late husband, and the Cardinal's own nephew Lactantio as the very model of a young man, who

> 'would rather meet
> A witch far north, than a fine fool in love,
> The sight would less afflict [him].'

As it proves, however, neither the antecedents nor the intentions of the nephew correspond to the character he wears in his fond uncle's eyes, while the Duchess in her turn is carried away from her thoughts of perpetual widowhood by a sudden passion. To veil her real affection, she pretends to be in love with Lactantio; but he is enamoured of another lady, who in her turn is beloved by the very Andrugio possessed, though unknown to himself, of the heart of the Duchess. To the embroglio thus established a further complication is added in the person of an unhappy little page, really a girl in disguise, whom the hypocritical rake Lactantio has ruined. The pathos of this latter character is spoilt by some scenes of the grossest indelicacy. A comic personage is supplied in Lactantio's servant Dondolo, a successful variation of the Launcelot Gobbo type, who, in a scene of novel invention, in a gipsy camp, makes some futile attempts to master a language not hitherto elucidated by scientific research. Among Middleton's works this seems to furnish a good example of his versification, which is fluent and pleasing in the dialogue; the numerous lyrics are all of them trivial.

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[1] Fleay, *u. s.*, p. 104.—As to the use of Scot see below under Thomas Heywood's *The Lancashire Witches*.

[2] Was St. Carlo Borromeo in the writer's mind?

Middleton and William Rowley's The Spanish Gipsy acted 1623; pr. 1653).

The Spanish Gipsie (acted 1623 and printed 1653 and 1661) has on its title-page the name of William Rowley in addition to that of Middleton, but it is of course possible that it was originally written by the latter alone. If Rowley's co-operation is here traceable, there can be little doubt that it should be sought more especially in act ii, which must have added largely to the theatrical effectiveness of the play. Two stories taken from Cervantes are, with certain original additions and modifications, here interwoven;—that of Roderigo and Clara being borrowed from the novel of *La Fuerza de la Sangre* (the Force of Blood), that of the gipsies from *La Gitanilla*[1]. The former is the story of a criminal wrong inflicted upon a pure maiden,—the perpetrator of which is brought to light by a strange combination of circumstances. In this part of the play some of the delicacy, as well as of the power, of the original still clings to the dramatic version of the story[2]. The rest of the plot is of a more complicated kind, turning on the supposition that a noble Spaniard Alvarez, in order to escape from the hands of justice after slaying an adversary in a duel twelve years before the date of the action, had assumed with his family and friends the disguise of gipsies. As such they come into the neighbourhood of 'Madrill,' where the beauty of one of the gipsy girls, known under the name of Pretiosa, attracts the admiration of the gallants of the capital. This Pretiosa is in reality the daughter of the corregidor of Madrid (the father of the sinning Roderigo), having been taken away as a child by his sister, the wife of Alvarez. The gipsies finally appear in the house of the corregidor in order to perform a play, and, the necessary discoveries having taken place, all the fugitives are restored to society—and Pretiosa (properly called Costanza) is united to her lover, who had joined the gipsies for her sake, and had consequently become involved in one of the difficulties incident to the ways of this community. The ways of the 'noble gipsies[1]' are depicted with much vivacity; and advantage is taken of the comic opportunities furnished by these surroundings[2]. The device of the play within the play, repeatedly used by Middleton, is here applied somewhat as in *Hamlet*; but the corregidor's intention of conveying a lesson to his guilty son is frustrated by that son himself, who as one of the performers in an 'extemporal' play[3], with a theme purposely chosen, is at liberty to say what he likes, and says it. As a whole, this for the most part finely-written, if not very perfectly constructed, play is a striking example of the romantic comedy of the later Elisabethan type.

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[1] See for a more precise statement, Dr. Herford, *u. s.*—The *Gitanilla* of Cervantes suggested two Spanish plays, by Montalvan and by Solis; our *Spanish Gipsy*; Wolff's *Preciosa*, famous by virtue of Weber's music; a character in Victor Hugo's *Notre Dame*, and touches in Longfellow's *Spanish Student*. See Ticknor's *Spanish Literature*, vol. ii. p. 430, *note*. Rapp, *Englisches Theater*, p. 44, thinks that comedies by Lope de Vega may also have been in the English authors' minds. For some further evidence as to the date of this play, see Fleay, *u. s.*, p. 101.

[2] See especially act i. sc. 3 and the close of act iii.

Middleton and William Rowley's A Fair Quarrel (*pr.* 1617).

In the comedy of *A Faire Quarrell* (printed, and reprinted, 1617) the name of William Rowley is again associated with that of Middleton. The most striking feature of this play is its presentment of a moral problem, novel but not unnatural in kind, and its solution of the same in accordance with a law higher than custom. Charles Lamb, in a celebrated criticism[4], has dwelt with great emphasis on the passionate power with which in his opinion the authors of this play have treated the problem in question, and in the 'noble and liberal casuistry' which could imagine and delineate so powerful an internal conflict, instead of merely resorting to 'the common stock of dramatic morality.' The hero, Captain Ager, has received from a friend, a soldier like himself, an insult reflecting on his mother's virtue. Before fighting the duel that is arranged in consequence, the Captain wishes to receive from his mother's lips a denial of the charge; but she, in her desire to prevent the conflict, falsely declares the accusation to be true. Her son hereupon refuses to draw his sword in a bad cause, and it is only when he has been called a coward that, having now an adequate reason, he fights. He disarms his adversary, and in the end everything is wound up satisfactorily, by means unconnected with the main subject of interest in the play. It is not to be denied that this plot furnishes an opportunity for an analysis of character, and for an illustration of a problem of social morality, possessing a far greater depth than is usual with so light-hearted a philosopher as Middleton; on the other hand, we have no reason for supposing William Rowley to have been capable of writing the scenes which deal with the main action of the play[1]. There is true nobility in the picture of Captain Ager's struggle with himself, recalling at least one later attempt not dissimilar in purpose, and designed to illustrate the distinction—meaningless to some—between moral and merely physical courage[2]. But the flaw in the construction of *A Fair Quarrel* is to be found in the supposition that a nobly trustful mind would fail to reject at once such a charge as that which Captain Ager is in the first instance called upon to meet. Reasons sufficient to account for his doubts ought, by a skilful management of the plot, to have been suggested from the outside, in such a way as to render excusable on the part of the son a passing hesitation as to the justice of his quarrel. Then would have followed as a crushing confirmation of these doubts the false confession of the mother, and the powerful situation in which the interest of the action centres would have been reached without our sympathy with the hero being impaired. It is needless to dwell on the painfully offensive bye-plot of the play[1], or on the humours, not ill-contrived, of master Chough, a 'Cornish diamond,' and a student in a school of 'roaring' in London—a notion quite worthy of Ben Jonson[2].

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[1] '*Alv.* Gipsies, but no tanned ones: no red-ochre rascals umbered with soot and bacon as the English gipsies are' [cf. *More Dissemblers besides Women*, act iv. sc. 1], 'that sally out upon pullen, lie in ambuscado for a rope of onions, as if they were Welsh freebooters; no, our stile has higher steps to climb over, Spanish gipsies, noble gipsies.' Act ii. sc. 1.)

[2] These are especially furnished forth by the humours of Soto, the servant of a foolish gentleman (Sancho) who has joined the gipsies from admiration of the *beaux yeux* of the 'little monkey' Pretiosa. Soto salutes the mother of the gipsies as 'mother Bumby' (cf. vol. i. p. 300), and describes himself as servant to 'Don Tomazo Portocarreco, nuncle to young Don Hortado de Mendonza, cousin-german to the Conde de Tindilla, and natural brother to Francisco de Bavadilla, one of the commendadors of Alcantara, a gentleman of long standing.' 'And of as long a style,' adds his interlocutor. (Act ii. sc. 1.)

[3] Cf. vol. i. p. 230, *note* 1.

[4] *Specimens*, p. 121.

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[1] Miss P. G. Wiggin, in one of the most convincing sections of her essay cited above, argues that the evidence of versification, as well as that of general style, conduct of plot, and peculiarities of phraseology, favour the conclusion that the main-plot is assignable to Middleton, and the under-plot to Rowley.

[2] I refer in particular to the late William Delafield Arnold's interesting novel of *Oakfield*. But of course the conditions of the problem there treated are different. In *A Faire Quarrel* the question is not whether a man should fight a duel, but whether he should fight except in a cause which he knows for certain to be just.

Middleton and William Rowley's The Changeling (acted by 1623).

Of *The Changeling* (acted as early as 1623) William Rowley was again joint author with Middleton. The unusual strength of the situations in this play, together with comic scenes of an almost equally pronounced kind, account for the great popularity which it enjoyed; it was revived after the Restoration, and the favour with which it was again received is attested by Pepys[3]. The humour of the scenes in the private madhouse will be less acceptable to a modern reader, who is unable to place himself on the standpoint of an age which regarded mental derangement as a subject for fun; but the subject is treated, after Middleton's manner, with more lightness of touch than is shown on a similar occasion[4] by Dekker, and the character of Lollio, the mad-doctor's man, is genuinely comic. In the main plot of this striking play, on the other hand—taken from one of the stories (Bk. i. Hist. 4) in John Reynolds' *Triumph of God's*

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[1] This seems to have been suggested by Dec. iv. Nov. 5 of Giraldi Cinthio's *Hecatommithi.*

[2] The art of 'roaring' is the art of bullying; and the Cornish gentleman, who possesses no other native art than that of wrestling (act ii. sc. 2: 'O Corineus, my predecessor, that I had lived in those days to see thee wrestle! on that condition I had died seven years ago'), seeks to acquire this fashionable accomplishment from a professor who teaches it (in Holborn at the sign of the Cheat-Loaf) in several languages, 'the Sclavonian, Parthamenian, Barmeothian, Tyburnian, Wappinganian, or the modern Londonian.' (Act iv. sc. 1.) There is some fun too in the character of the Surgeon, who, like his brethren in Molière, is unable to express a plain fact in plain terms; and describes his patient's wound as 'inclining to paralism,' and his body as 'cacochymic.' (Act iv. sc. 2.)

[3] He went to see it on his 29th birthday, Feb. 23rd, 1661.

[4] Cf. *ante,* p. 463. The title of the piece has reference to the character of Antonio, who pretends to be a *changeling* or idiot for his own purpose, while another character (Franciscus) similarly counterfeits madness.

Revenge against Murther (printed 1621)—it is impossible not to recognise a most powerful subject for dramatic treatment; an offensive developement is, however, given to its latter part. 'Beatrice-Joana, in order to marry Alsemero, causeth De Flores to murther Alfonso Piracquo, who was a suitor to her. Alsemero marries her, and finding De Flores and her in adultery, kills them both.' The character of De Flores (said to have been one of Betterton's best parts), an ill-favoured villain, who consents to become a murderer on behalf of Beatrice, and then to her horror exacts from her the recompense after which he had lusted from the first, is drawn with much force, and, while owing nothing to the novel on which the play was founded, has a touch in it of Shakspere's Gloster. But though the power of the scenes between the pair, before and after the murder, was beyond a doubt justly described by Scott as 'horribly striking,' I am inclined to think this tribute to the reality of the passion which they depict sufficient[1]; and the authors have needlessly made ghastly additions to a plot the blackness of which required no intensification[2].

Middleton's Women beware Women (pr. 1657).

The tragedy of *Women Beware Women* (printed in 1657 with *More Dissemblers besides Women*) is a welcome illustration of the measure of Middleton's effectiveness as a tragic dramatist, when unassisted by his familiar helpmate William Rowley. Two plots, of which one is stated to be borrowed from a contemporary romance called *Hyppolito and Isabella*[3], while the other has a certain connexion with history, are more or less ingeniously interwoven into a double tale of crime and its requital. The former story turns on the guilty passion of an uncle for his niece, who has been made to disbelieve in their kinship, and who, in order to obtain a cloak for the passion which she is now resolved upon indulging, has married a foolish wealthy young ward. The other is in its beginnings identical with that of the life of the historical Bianca Capello, who ran away from her father's house at Venice with a young Florentine merchant's clerk,—or, as he is called in the play, a 'factor.' At Florence, after being married to this man, she became the mistress of Prince Francesco de' Medici, and remained such, after his marriage and his accession to the dukedom, during twenty years. Her miserable husband was provided with an appointment in the palace[1]. In the play, however, the Duke, who has become enamoured of Bianca on seeing her at a window as he passes in state[2], begins, with the aid of a certain Livia, one of the best-drawn characters in the play, at least in the earlier scenes[3], by making her his mistress, and afterwards marries her in order to meet the moral exhortations of his brother the Cardinal. Her previous husband, whose lamentations extend to a great length, but show occasional touches of pathos, is consoled by Livia herself. But the penalty of sin has to be paid; and in a final scene—by means of one of those masques with the aid of which Middleton, like other dramatists of his period, repeatedly winds up a complicated plot—a massacre of *dramatis personae* is accomplished, on a scale to which, in the plays of this period at least, it would not be easy to find a parallel. Some passages in this tragedy are not devoid of fire, and the scenes in which the Duke's meeting with Bianca is contrived and in

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[1] Act ii. sc. 2; act iii. sc. 4. Mr. Swinburne approves Leigh Hunt's praise of the character of De Flores as one which 'for effect at once tragical, probable, and poetical, surpasses anything he knows of in the drama of domestic life': and Mr. Bullen is much of the same opinion.

[2] Miss Wiggin, whose careful analysis of this play reflects high credit on the discretion with which she applies her canons of distinction, arrives at the conclusion that while the under-plot of this play was written by Rowley, he was also the author of the opening and closing scenes of the main-plot; but she fails to trace in the great scene of the third act any characteristics so proper to Middleton as to allow us confidently to assign it to his authorship.

[3] See Langbaine's *Dramatick Poets* (1691), who cites the tribute of a contemporary dramatic poet (Nathaniel) Richards:

> 'I that have seen't, can say, having just cause,
> Ne'er Tragedy came off with more Applause.'

According to Mr. Fleay, *u. s.*, p. 97, '[Hart's] *Hyppolito and Isabella*' was entered on the Stationers' Registers, November 9, 1627, the year of Middleton's death, 'but no doubt the romance and the play had a common origin.'

[1] Cf. Leo, *Geschichte der italienischen Staaten* (Hamburg, 1832), vol. v. p. 562.

[2] This brief scene (act i. sc. 3) recalls a charming passage in Goethe's *Egmont* (act i).

[3] Charles Lamb (*Specimens*, p. 137 compares her to the Wife of Bath.

which he entertains her at Court, the miserable husband standing by, are written with effective vivacity. But Middleton fails to show himself capable of true tragic self-control; and though his aim is undoubtedly moral, he is unable by lofty sentiment to furnish any relief to the grossness of the situations, while the humorous characters are revoltingly coarse. He lacked, in short, both delicacy of feeling and sustained earnestness; and this tragedy, though it has received high praise, seems to me to indicate that his most distinctive dramatic powers lay in a different direction.

Middleton's comedies of manners:

He was, I am inclined to think, most truly at home in plays dealing with subjects derived in the main from his observation of the manners of the world actually around him. In this group may be included a large number of his comedies, including several of his most successful efforts.

Michaelmas Term (pr. 1607).

Michaelmas Term (printed 1607) is justly commended by Dyce, and described by Mr. Swinburne as 'an excellent Hogarthian comedy.' It is indeed one of the best-constructed and most freshly-written among the numerous Elisabethan plays of its kind; for its *dramatis personae* consist of the usual figures of that species of comedy whose scene lies in the city of London, and whose satire is directed against the every-day follies and vices of the age. The unfortunate hero of the action, Easy, is, in the parlance of his age, a 'country gull,' or in that of more modern times a 'pigeon'; the sharpers who seek to effect his ruin consist of a usurer, Quomodo, and a pack of gentlemen-cozeners. Nothing could be more drastically true to life than the way in which Easy is wheedled into apparently inevitable ruin; the gambling-scene in the Ordinary[1] is excellent of its kind; and still better are the subsequent machinations of Quomodo and his accomplices to entangle their unfortunate victim by bond upon bond, till the usurer fancies he has Easy's whole estate in his hands[2]. Overjoyed with his success, unable to dwell in imagination on anything but his 'lands in Essex' and his 'orchard in Essex,' the usurer bethinks him of a device to enable him to enjoy by anticipation the pleasures proper to the founder of a family of landed proprietors. He feigns death, in order to observe how his wife and his son, a hopeful youth who has finished his education at Cambridge[1] and been lately entered of an Inn of Court, will bear themselves on the occasion. To his utter discomfiture, it turns out that his wife is in love with his victim Easy, whom she marries then and there, and that the young Cantab is wholly quite unembarrassed by respect for his father's memory. By a cleverly-contrived trick the disguised Quomodo is made to sign a release for Easy from his obligations; and thus the biter is bit, and a conclusion is reached, which (though rather hastily managed) is as cleverly contrived as the general course of the play. A bye-plot, on which it is impossible to dwell, exhibits the downfall of a country-wench, whose own father is the witness of her sins[2]. The play is written with so much vivacity and, considering the subject, with so little coarseness, that it will be read with great pleasure as a most spirited and healthy satirical sketch of the manners of the times. A very originally-conceived Induction is prefixed to the play: Michaelmas Term, as the father and feeder of the other Terms, appears to usher in 'those familiar accidents which happened in town in the circumference of those six weeks whereof' he is lord[3]. '*Sat sapienti*,' he concludes; 'I hope there's no fools in the house.'

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[1] Act ii. sc. 1.

[2] The 'commodities' (cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 403, *note* 1) of course play a part in the usurer's 'expedients.' 'I know some gentlemen in town,' he assures the hesitating victim, 'ha' been glad, and are glad at this time, to take up commodities in hawks' hoods and brown paper'; as to which latter Dyce compares *Measure for Measure*, act iv. sc. 3, where it is coupled with 'old

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ginger.' This practice continued to prevail to such an extent that Bacon (in 1623) proposed to legislate against it. (See Spedding's *Life*, vol. vii. p. 419.)

[1] '*Vim, Vitam, spemque salutem*' is this young gentleman's way of wishing good morning. 'He shows you there,' proudly says his father; 'he was a Cambridge man, sir' (act ii. sc. 3).

[2] There is something very touching and—so perennial are the lines in which folly and misery run—indescribably *modern* in the first appearance on the stage of the Father (act i. sc. 2).

[3] Middleton (see also his *Phoenix*) seems to have been particularly well acquainted with the ways of the profession to which he probably at one time in name belonged. The first scene of the play contains an amusing account of a lawyer who 'died of an old grief he had, that the vacation was fourteen weeks long.' 'He was one of those that would fain have brought in the

A Trick to Catch the Old One (*pr.* 1608).

A Trick to Catch the Old-One (printed in 1608) is one of Middleton's most vivacious comedies; and from its plot Massinger borrowed a few hints for his famous play of *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*[1]. Although moral justice can certainly not be said to be very symmetrically dealt out to the characters of this piece—for while the usurers are punished, the libertine and his companion are rewarded—the plot is contrived with considerable ingenuity[2]. Witwood, a profligate nephew ruined with the help of his uncle[3], the usurer Lucre, pretends to have secured the hand of a rich widow, whom he induces a frail friend of his to personate; and the old usurer immediately becomes all kindness, in the hope of ultimately making a prey of the pair. But the news having reached the ears of another usurer, of the name of Hoard, it occurs to the latter to secure the prize to himself. Witwood is only too happy to indulge him by connivance; and thus while Lucre has freed his lucky nephew from his obligations, Hoard frees him from the helpmate with whose aid he has effected his liberation from them. This—in one-half of its results—somewhat reprehensible plot is carried out in Middleton's gay, though at times very coarse, manner; and the characters of the two usurers, their congenial friends and colleagues, and Dampit, a 'trampler' or lawyer of the most disreputable kind, are drawn with considerable spirit.

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heresy of a fifth term; often crying, with a loud voice, O why should we lose Bartholomew week?'—(The scene between the adventurer Lethe and his parent 'Mother Gruel' which follows, is obviously imitated from the meeting between Launcelot Gobbo and his father.)—Michaelmas Term (which then had 'eight returns'; see C. Tourneur's *The Revenger's Tragedy*, act v) was equivalent to what in modern parlance would be called 'the Season'; and 'termers' was a name of opprobrium applied to persons who came up to town to make their harvest in term-time. (See Middleton's Address to the Reader, prefixed to *The Family of Love*.)

[1] There is also some resemblance as to plot in Lodowick Barry's *Ram Alley, or Merry Tricks* (printed 1611).—For the title of the play cf. Day's *Isle of Gulls*, Act ii: 'We are in the way to catch the Old One.'

[2] Dr. Herford describes this as 'the strongest of Middleton's comedies of intrigue.'

[3] Witwood asserts it to be a principle in usury that a man's nearest kin—'and that's his *uncle*'—should cheat him in preference to a stranger. There can surely be no connexion here with the circumstance that a well-known legalised kind of usury is to this day said to be carried on by 'uncles'?

The Family of Love (pr. 1608).

The Familie of Love (printed 1608) is an ordinary comedy of intrigue; and though introducing as a comic element some coarse satire on an extravagant developement of religious enthusiasm, effects this purpose in such a way as to lead to the conclusion that the dramatist knew little or nothing of the principles or practices which he was attempting to satirise. Some witty touches are not wanting; but it would be a mistake to seek here for evidence of anything more than the author's hatred of a supposed hypocritical cloak for immorality[1].

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[1] The curious will find in Dyce's edition (vol. ii. pp. 103-6) a sufficient number of references to contemporary accounts of the sect which gives its name to the play. The members of this sect presented a petition to King James at the time of his accession, with what results is not known. Its founder was Heinrich Niclaes of Münster in Westphalia (the claim has, however, been disputed in favour of David George of Delft), who established a religious association under this name in Holland about the year 1555. The principles of the sect soon spread to England, where editions of Niclaes' writings appeared in 1574, many of these being reprinted at the congenial dates of 1648 and 1655. (See *Worthington's Diary and Correspondence*, edited for the Chetham Society by Mr. R. C. Christie, vol. ii. part 2, p. 370, where there is a reference to a bibliography of publications for or against Niclaes in *Notes and Queries*, 4th series, vol. iv. pp. 356, 404, 430. *Ib.* p. 168 Mr. Christie gives a short account of the Founder. The gist of his teaching seems to have been that the essence of religion consists in the feelings of *Divine* love, and that all other theological tenets, whether relating to matters of faith or modes of worship, are of no importance. See also Nippold, *Heinrich Niclaes und das Haus der Liebe*, in *Zeitschrift für historische Theologie*, 1862, vols. iii and iv. Neal, the historian of Puritanism, says (vol. i. p. 273) that the members of this sect 'had their private assemblies of devotion, for which they tasted of the severity of the government.' In *The Time's Whistle* (1614-5), Sat. i. vv. 195-7) we read:

'Our Anabaptists I will set aside,
With Families of Love, whose aims are wide
From the true faith.'

The sect still existed in 1686, when some members of it presented an address to King James II after the issue of his Declaration of Indulgence. See the curious notice in Evelyn's *Diary and Correspondence* (ed. H. B. Wheatley), vol. iii. pp. 39-40, of their interview with the King, whom they informed that 'they were a sort of refined Quakers, but their number very small, not consisting, as they said, of above threescore in all, and these chiefly belonging to the Isle of Ely.'—Middleton of course satirises the Family of Love as belonging to the general host of Puritans, from which in their petition they appear (in order to avoid the ill-will of the King) to have sought to distinguish themselves. The rudiments of City Puritanism, as they appeared to its enemies, are described with some wit as follows (act iii. sc. 3): 'You shall hear how far I am entered in the right way already. First, I live in charity, and give small alms to such as be not of the right sect; I take under twenty

Your Five Gallants (*lic.* 1608).

Your Five Gallants (licensed 1608) is another comedy of the lighter sort. Its hero, assuming the character of pure inexperience in the person of a University man fresh to London[1]—unveils the wiles of five representative gallants ('rare fellows' who 'live on nothing; many cannot live on something'), whose several provinces need not be particularised.

A Mad World, my Masters (*pr.* 1608).

A Mad World, my Masters (printed 1608), while written with a full share of Middleton's usual vivacity and in part very ingenious in construction[2], deserves, even more strongly than a play by the same author already noticed[3], a reprobation not usually merited by the Elisabethan comedies, whatever the repulsiveness of their situations or the grossness of their language. The plot turns on the cozening by a young scamp of a foolish old grandfather; but although a kind of retributive justice is wreaked upon both, it hardly amounts to a punishment in the case of the hero, who is at the same time the rascal of the piece. The pre-Restoration,

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i' th' hundred, nor no forfeiture of bonds unless the law tell my conscience I may do't; I set no pot on a' Sundays, but feed on cold meat dressed a' Saturdays; I keep no holydays nor fasts, but eat most flesh o' Fridays of all days i' the week; I do use to say inspired graces, able to starve a wicked man with length; I have Aminadabs and Abrahams to my godsons, and I chide them when they ask me blessing; and I do hate the red letter more than I follow the written verity.'—In Thomas Heywood and Brome's *The Witches of Lancashire* (act ii) a household turned topsy-turvy by witchcraft is satirically referred to as 'this Family of Love.'

[1] 'Whence comes he, sir?' 'Piping hot from the university; he smells of buttered loaves yet; an excellent scholar, but the arrantest ass.' (Act ii. sc. 1.)

[2] So, for instance, the grandson's robbery of his grandfather Sir Bounteous Progress, whose prodigal hospitality he abuses in disguise (act ii), and the clever device of the supposed play, by means of which the scamp and his friends contrive their escape (act v. sc. 1; a similar trick is played in *The Mayor of Quinborough*, cf. *ante*, p. 499).—The unerring instinct of the most shameless of the Restoration dramatists seized upon this comedy for partial adaptation in one of the worst of her own endeavours to excel; but in Mrs. Aphra Behn's *City Heiress* the plot takes a different end, and Sir Bounteous Progress, 'the good-humoured and liberal old libertine' who so greatly tickles Mr. Swinburne's fancy, becomes Sir Timothy Treat-All, 'an old seditious Knight, that keeps open house for Commonwealthsmen and true blue Protestants,' while his nephew Wilding is introduced as 'a Tory' by the sympathetic authoress. Middleton's comedy was again adapted in part by Charles Johnson, a dramatist of rather later date. It may be added that Mawworm, one of the minor characters of *A Mad World*, has nothing in common with his famous namesake in Bickerstaffe's *The Hypocrite*.

[3] Cf. *ante* as to *A Trick to Catch the Old One*.

unlike the Restoration, drama, rarely lays itself open in this way to the charge of tending towards a sympathetic encouragement of vice. In this comedy, the single punishment that, after a series of rascally tricks, befalls Dick Follywit, is a marriage accepted by him in very good heart, and further recommended to him by gold, which he says at the conclusion 'makes amends for vice.' Yet so little care was bestowed by a quick-witted dramatist such as Middleton upon anything beyond the immediate effect of his productions, that in this play a good deal of didactic morality is placed in the mouth of a penitent debauchee, who—without much regard to the general drift of the action—is tempted on the stage by a fiend in female shape.

Middleton and Dekker's The Roaring Girl (pr. 1611).

In *The Roaring Girle, or Moll Cut-Purse* (printed 1611), in which, as already stated[1], Dekker was associated with Middleton, there seems every reason to assign to the latter a principal share. In this sketch from real life[2], at first sight equally audacious in name and in design, the reader is both surprised and refreshed by a character drawn with an odd combination of realistic vigour, genuine humour, and very kindly feeling. There are touches in it of that pathetic force which Dekker could on occasion reveal; but the bright vivacity which gives something like a charm to this strange figure may be confidently ascribed to Middleton's happier touch. The idea of enforcing by means of an example boldly taken from real life the truth that virtue may be found in the most unexpected quarters, had not become hackneyed in the Elisabethan age. Nor need the paradoxical tendency of later periods of literature to work to death the converse antithesis between 'respectability' and goodness blind us to the lesson that

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[1] Cf. *ante*, p. 469.

[2] The heroine's real name was Mary Frith, and she is said to have been born in 1584 and to have died in 1659. Her actual character cannot perhaps be 'rehabilitated' with certainty; but charity may conclude that Middleton and Dekker had fair grounds for the view they took of her. Her Life was published in 1662; and allusions to her abound in our literature, dramatic and other; 'mistress Mall's picture' (*Twelfth Night*, act i. sc. 3) is supposed to be one of these. (Cf. *ante*, p. 145.) See Dyce's and Bullen's *Introductions* to the play, where may be seen, in addition to a portrait in the latter of more historic pretensions, the facsimile of a woodcut (from the old edition of the play itself) that represents Moll indulging in a pipe of tobacco, whereof she is said to have been the first to vindicate the 'use' to her sex.—In a contemporary letter from John Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton, her repentant speech at St. Paul's Cross in February, 1612, is described. She is said to have been drunk on the occasion (*Court and Times of James I*, vol. i. p. 161); and she certainly survived her 'repentance' for many years.—She is also introduced, though under no favourable aspect, in a scene of Field's *Amends for Ladies* (1618); and Day wrote some sort of story-book about her (entered 1616).

> 'He hates unworthily, that by rote contemns,
> For the name neither saves, nor yet condemns.'

The heroine of this comedy at all events vindicates her right to an equitable judgment in so natural and pleasing a manner, that the reader is reconciled to the very low company into which he is introduced by the success of the play in exemplifying the principle, admirably expressed by Middleton[1], that ''tis the excellency of a writer to leave things better than he finds 'em.'

Middleton (and Jonson and Fletcher?)'s The Widow (pr. 1652).

On the title-page of the comedy of *The Widow* (written late in 1615 or early in 1616, but not printed till 1652) Ben Jonson and Fletcher are mentioned as joint authors with Middleton; but the co-operation of the two more celebrated writers seems to have been doubted at an early date[2]. If Jonson had anything to do with it, his co-operation might possibly be traceable in the fourth act, where the thief Latrocinio assumes the disguise of an 'empiric' or quack doctor, and picks the pockets of the credulous patients whom he is pretending to relieve of their ailments[3]. But though this device is quite in Jonson's manner, its execution is certainly unequal to that which was habitual to him in his best comedies. The main plot of the play turns to a great extent on the idea—so familiar to modern comedy—of a widow-hunt[1]; but the action contains little that rises above the ordinary level of the popular Elisabethan stage.

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[1] See the prose preface 'To the Comic Play-readers,' which bears Middleton's signature.

[2] See Dyce's introductory note to the play, vol. iii. p. 339; and his edition of Beaumont and Fletcher's *Works*, vol. iv. p. 302. Mr. Bullen cannot trace Jonson's hand in this play, or Fletcher's, unless the songs be his; Mr. Fleay considers that it was evidently written by Middleton alone.

[3] 'When the highways grow thin with travellers,
And few portmanteaus stirring, as all trades
Have their dead time we see, thievery poor takings,
. . . .
Then do I take my inn, and those curmudgeons
Whose purses I can never get abroad,
I take 'em more at ease here i' my chamber,
And make 'em come to me; it's more state-like too.
Hang him that has but one way to his trade!' (Act iv. sc. 2.)

Middleton's A Chaste Maid in Cheapside (*pr.* 1630).

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside (printed 1630) is generally allowed to be one of the most outrageous examples of the class of comedy to which it belongs. One of the characters observes (unfortunately the date of the play is uncertain[2], so that the historical application of the passage must remain undetermined):

> 'I have known
> This city now above this seven years,
> But, I protest, in better state of government
> I never knew it yet, nor ever heard of;
> There have been more religious wholesome laws
> In the half-circle of a year erected
> For common good than memory e'er knew of,
> Setting apart corruption of promoters,
> And other poisonous officers, that infect
> And with a venomous breath taint every goodness[3].'

Two of these 'promoters' appear on the stage to practise their trade of spying out offences against the law, and—which is beyond a promoter's line of business—to execute it by a summary process of confiscation. But the offences committed in this play are for the most part of a less venial character than that of selling meat in Lent. Its most original type is, however, too diverting to be passed by without notice. In the first scene of the play, the goldsmith Yellowhammer and his wife receive by 'one of Hobson's porters[4]' a letter from their hopeful son Tim at

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[1] 'To see,' says her principal suitor (act i. sc. 2), 'how fortune has provided for all mortality's ruins! your college for your old-standing scholar, your hospital for your lame-creeping soldier, . . . your open house for your beggar, and your widow for your gentleman.' For some of her suitors the widow Valeria, however, proves more than a 'match.'

[2] Mr. Fleay dates it between 1611 and 1613; see, however, Bullen, *Introduction*, pp. xlii-xliii.

[3] Act ii. sc. 1.—The Fletcherian fall of the verse in this passage will be readily noted.

[4] Hobson is of course the famous Cambridge carrier, immortalised by Milton.

Cambridge, which (by a free translation of its Latin exordium) they interpret as a request for a pair of boots and 'pay the porter'; and in a later part of the play Tim himself appears, apprising his mother, who is anxious to introduce him to female society [1], that she 'entreats like a freshwoman,' and favouring the audience with a notion of an 'under-bachelor's' manners and accomplishments sufficiently instructive and entertaining. He chops logic with his tutor, and looks out unfamiliar words in 'Rider's dictionary'; but he shows small knowledge of the world, and is finally doomed to a most unfortunate marriage, his consolation being the reflexion 'O tempora, O mores!' As already observed, there can be little doubt that Middleton had some personal experience of Cambridge life, and an odd perspective is opened by such reminiscences into the benefits derived in his age (and perhaps now and then in later generations) from a 'University education' by lads sent up to its pastures as empty as Tim, and returning from them, like him, with all 'the Dunces' in their 'own pate,' and prepared to 'read 'em to other [2].'

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[1] 'He is so bashful,' says Mistress Yellowhammer—(without looking into the future)—

'that's the spoil of youth:
In the university they're still kept to men
And ne'er train'd up to women's company.' (Act iii. sc. 2.)

[2] The 'Dunces' are of course the schoolmen.—Tim's sense of masculine dignity is delightful. When his mother offers him simple refreshment, he exclaims indignantly:

'Come I from Cambridge,
And offer me six plums?'

and when, on the other hand, she threatens to make his tutor whip Tim, he loses patience completely:

'O monstrous absurdity!
Ne'er was the like in Cambridge since my time;
'Life, whip a bachelor! you'd be laugh'd at soundly;
Let not my tutor hear you, 't would be a jest,
Through the whole university.' (Act iii. sc. 2.)

From which it may be inferred, that young gentlemen who had not yet taken their B.A. were liable to this form of correction; which completely agrees with the statute of Christ's College noticed by Mr. Masson in his *Life of Milton* (2nd edn., vol. i. pp. 137–8): 'Si tamen adultus fuerit, alioquin virgâ corrigatur.'—Most of the characters in Thomas Thomson's *Mother Shipton, her Life* (pr. 1668), were according to Halliwell-Phillipps taken from Middleton's comedy and from Massinger's *City Madam*.

Anything for a Quiet Life (pr. 1662).

In *Anything for a Quiet Life* (printed 1662, but probably acted not long after 1617[1]) there is little to be commended besides the title. It is one of Middleton's hastiest performances. This is evident from the very form—as to which it is at times difficult to say whether it be verse or prose—although the piece is not devoid of good writing. The young stepmother, who homoeopathically cures her husband's follies by apparently obliging him to commit worse follies still in order to satisfy her whims, fails to arouse our interest, while the remainder of the plot contains much that is intolerably offensive. This play incidentally proves that Middleton could write very good French.

No Wit, No Help like a Woman's (acted 1613 *c.*).

Finally, *No Wit, No Help like a Woman's* (acted apparently 1613 *c.*[2], printed in 1657) is a vivaciously written comedy of intrigue, made up of two plots, either of which would have sufficed for a play in the earlier days of the English stage. The plot with which the action opens in its symmetrical setting and its easy developement recalls the old comedies based on classical models, and the very notion of the origin of the difficulty—the loss of a wife and daughter seized by pirates, the return of the wrong girl, and the delayed return of the wife supposed dead — smacks of Plautus and Terence, while Savourwit the servant is a Davus of the old school. On the other hand, the second plot, in which the brave Mistress Low-Water disguised as a gallant outwits the rich widow Goldenfleece and her four suitors, and after pretending to marry the widow herself, secures her for her brother, is of a sort more familiar to later Elisabethan comedy, and is carried out with remarkable spirit. The most amusing of the four suitors (who perform a kind of masque of the Four Elements for the diversion of the Widow) is Weatherwise, whose belief in almanacks is made the subject of much detailed fun of the Jonsonian kind. The play, though some passages in it are admirable examples of the excellences of Middleton's comic style[1], is however rather lengthy; and the author had not good taste enough to avoid, or at least to pass quietly over, an exceedingly painful situation arising out of the former of his plots and wholly unfit for comedy[2].

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[1] 'The late ill-starred voyage to Guiana' seems to refer to Ralegh's 'last voyage to Guiana' (act i. sc. 1).

[2] The date of the original performance seems to be suggested by a passage in act iii. sc. 1; doubtless introduced when this play was revived by Shirley at Dublin under the title of *No Wit to a Woman's*: 'If I, that have proceeded in five-and-twenty such books of astronomy, should not be able to put down a scholar now in one thousand six hundred and thirty-eight, the dominical letter being G, I stand for a goose.'

A Game at Chess (acted August, 1624).

I have reserved for a special notice one of Middleton's plays which is entirely *sui generis*. To the circumstances connected with the production and prohibition of *A Game at Chess* (acted in August 1624) reference has already been made. It would be impossible to furnish a complete key to this curious dramatic allegory; but enough of its meaning reveals itself to warrant the following statement, of which the length may perhaps stand excused by the peculiar interest attaching to the episode dealt with in the play.

There can be no difficulty in accounting for the audacity with which, in *A Game at Chess*, Middleton ventured to bring on the popular stage more or less veiled representatives of the highest personages in the realm, as well as of a foreign sovereign with whom King James I had long desired to enter into a more intimate understanding, and of a diplomatist who had come to exercise upon him an influence of singular power. For the Spanish King and his agent at the English Court, whom the dramatist thus dared publicly to subject to the most truculent invective and to expose to the most uncompromising satire, were the marked objects of a popular hatred compounded of ardent patriotism and embittered prejudice; and at the time of the production of the play could be formally treated as national enemies. Thus the current of public feeling, of which this comedy was designed to take advantage, might well be deemed capable of bearing on its crest even so unprecedented an example of dramatic licence.

Historical antecedents of the production of the play.

The course and final collapse of the famous project of the 'Spanish Marriage' form one of the most peculiar episodes in the history of modern statesmanship in an era—of which this is not the place to indicate the limits—when dynastic and national policy were dealt with as indissoluble. A late historical writer, almost uniquely qualified by his political experiences to formulate a judgment on such transactions, described this particular one 'high comedy' of the most genuine type [1]. Yet it would not have deserved the attention it has received, both at his hands and of our own historian of the earlier Stuart and Commonwealth periods [2], were it not, taken altogether, the most salient exemplification of the futility of the statecraft of King James I, and had not its *dénouement* proved a turning-point in the history of our national foreign policy.

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[1] Charles Lamb has quoted several in *Specimens*, pp. 141–3. [2] Act iv. sc. 1.

Since the conclusion of peace soon after the accession of James I, the relations between the Spanish and English governments had been in intention uniformly friendly. While the conception survived among the more ardent spirits of our nation that its proper place was at the head of a combination of Protestant Europe against Spain, the cautious policy of Salisbury (Robert Cecil) prevented the re-opening of the conflict which Ralegh and kindred souls never ceased to desire. On the other hand, Salisbury seems never to have cherished any intention of bringing about a close alliance between Spain and England, such as the Spanish government had at heart; and the early suggestions made on the Spanish side of a marriage between the (then) Prince of Wales and a Spanish infanta met with no response at the English Court. When, towards the end of Salisbury's career, James deemed it convenient to re-open the negotiations on the subject, he found that the hand of the infanta Anna was no longer free; and the death of Henry Prince of Wales closed the first stage of this series of transactions. The marriage of the Princess Elisabeth to the heir of the Palatinate was hailed with enthusiasm by the Protestant feeling of the nation; and though under the ascendancy of Somerset pacific relations continued with

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[1] See Guizot, *Un Projet de Mariage Royal* (Paris, 1863).

[2] Dr. S. R. Gardiner, in his *Prince Charles and the Spanish Marriage*, and *England under Buckingham and Charles I*, republished in vols. iii–v of his *History of England*, &c.

Spain (the favourite was himself accused of betraying state-secrets to the Spanish government), public feeling was becoming more and more eager for a rupture. Such an event seemed near at hand in 1613; but the King was eager to maintain peace. In order to foster these sentiments on his part, the Spanish Government in this year despatched as ambassador to England Don Diego Sarmiento de Acuña (who in 1617 became Count Gondomar). Soon afterwards, at a time when the King was on extremely bad terms with his Parliament, negotiations were set on foot for the marriage of Charles Prince of Wales with the Infanta Maria, the younger daughter of Philip III. The difficulties were great; but no account was taken of the real objection, the continued hatred of the nation against Spain. While a Commission of the Council was considering the articles of the Marriage Treaty, events were preparing which might have buried its memory in the flames of a national struggle. But James resolutely shut his eyes to the national sentiment, and Ralegh's head fell on the block, to all intents and purposes as a sacrifice to the wounded susceptibilities of Spanish pride.

In 1619 the Bohemian crisis (which opened the Thirty Years' War), and the assumption by King James' son-in-law of the Bohemian crown, seemed to render it incumbent upon England to choose her side in the struggle which was now really opening against the great dynastic combination of the two branches of the House of Habsburg. The desire of the nation was that England should identify herself with the cause of the Elector Palatine. King James in so far coincided with the national wish that when his son-in-law was in danger of losing his hereditary dominions, the Palatinate, he became genuinely anxious to avert such a catastrophe. The design of the Spanish Government was to dupe King James into a policy of peace and to flatter his belief in his influence as a mediator. In 1620 Gondomar returned to England as ambassador; and while Spain was preparing to co-operate in the invasion of the Palatinate, the negotiations for the marriage-treaty were resumed. They were carried on even after the Palatinate had been entered by Spanish troops; for King James was in hopes that by means of this marriage he might recover for his son-in-law what he had by this time promised the nation, if necessary, to recover by force of arms. Philip IV was now King of Spain, and Olivares the director of his policy. For a time Philip proposed to withdraw from the match, and Olivares was anxious to substitute a scheme of his own. But a master-stroke had been prepared by Gondomar, before quitting his ambassadorial post in 1622. The Prince of Wales had promised him to visit Madrid in person, and on this visit Gondomar intended that measures should be taken to bring about his conversion to the Church of Rome.

The visit took place in 1623; and on it Charles was accompanied by Buckingham. On August 28 the Prince swore to the marriage contract, without any satisfactory arrangement having been made as to the restitution of the Palatinate; but on October 5 he and his companion landed on the English shores. The Prince had returned without his Spanish bride; and the joy of the people knew no bounds. But in truth the affair was not yet at an end, though the end was near. Nor was it till at last James found himself the only remaining believer in the possibility of carrying out his scheme, that he gave way, recalled his minister from Madrid, and summoned a Parliament. Ever since his return with the Prince of Wales, Buckingham had been riding on the top of the wave of the popular excitement against Spain; and by the middle of March, 1624, war was declared against that Power.

It was in the full swell of this feeling, and in the midst of the elation caused by what seemed the consummated victory of the national policy, that Middleton's comedy was produced. The play was brought out in the summer of 1624; and although the stage had joined in the demonstrations against Spain and the Spanish ambassador Gondomar in the previous year, it is difficult to suppose that Middleton's invective had been equalled by any previous dramatist either in vehemence or in elaborateness[1], or that any popular manifesto so absolutely outspoken as *A Game at Chess* could have been hazarded while the results of the great manœuvre of the royal statecraft were still in suspense. As an expression of popular feeling this comedy is thoroughly faithful; as an allegorical picture of historical events and characters it presents a blending of fact, exaggeration, and delusion. It was a fact that King Philip IV of Spain had resumed schemes dictated by a dynastic ambition akin to that of Philip II himself. To represent English Protestant as involved in serious peril by the schemes of Gondomar was an exaggeration. And unhappily it proved a delusion, although one in which the whole nation may be said to have shared, to have trusted in Buckingham as the minister who would set right the long estrangement between the political aspirations of the nation and the action of its government in regard to the high political problems of the times.

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[1] The date of production of *A Game at Chess* appears from the correspondence concerning the play between Secretary Conway and the Privy Council, cited *ap.* Collier, vol. i. p. 427, and by the other authorities. That dramatic, as well as other satire, had been previously directed against Gon-

But popular feeling, in its periods of existment, if it needs heroes to embody its aspirations, also needs personal outlets for its wrath. That Gondomar, although he had last left England in May 1622, should have been fixed upon for the purpose in a play produced more than two years afterwards, cannot be regarded as unnatural or in a sense as unwarranted. His power over King James had probably been quite as great as the popular instinct supposed. But he was hated above all from religious motives, which in this age still entered so predominantly into politics; and he had

domar, appears from a letter from John Howell to Sir John North, dated Madrid, August 15, 1623, in *Epistolae Ho-Ëlianae* (Bk. i. Sect. 3, No. 20). There is no reason for doubting the date of this letter, where, after some kindly references to Gondomar's good temper and to his efforts on behalf of English subjects in Spain, the writer continues: 'I am sorry to hear how other Nations do much tax the English of their Incivility to public Ministers of State, and what Ballads and Pasquils and Fopperies and Plays, were made against Gondomar for doing the King his Master's business.'—In the previous edition of this play I created an imaginary difficulty by remarking on the circumstance that though in Conway's letter the information as to the offending play was said to be derived from the Spanish ambassador, both the Spanish ambassadors had left England two months previously. Dr. Gardiner has been good enough to point out to me that as a matter of fact, though the Marquess de la Inojosa left England in June, 1624, Don Carlos de Coloma remained behind. He has also referred me to a mention of the ambassador's interference with the representation of Gondomar in a stage comedy, in a despatch of the Florentine agent Salvetti, dated August $\frac{20}{30}$, 1624.

in truth done much to influence the most powerful of popular antipathies which it was possible for him to provoke. Although at home in Spain he was said to have helped Englishmen out of the clutches of the Inquisition, and although there seems to have been an element of geniality in his personal temperament, yet he was a bigot in principle, and, while advancing straight upon his goal, ran in blinkers. Thoroughly convinced of the traditional irresistibility of the power which he represented, he contributed to impress his own conception upon the King to whom he was accredited, and had no comprehension whatever of the force of the English Protestant sentiment which he induced that King, notwithstanding his knowledge of it and his sympathy with it, to affront. Upon Queen Anne, a secret convert to Rome, he counted as a sure ally in his ulterior schemes. He succeeded, by working upon the King's self-consciousness, in urging him into a line of policy in matters affecting religion which set the nation in a flame. In 1621, when he believed himself to have reached the height of his success, King James having dissolved his Parliament, Gondomar wrote that this was 'the best thing that has happened in the interests of religion since Luther began to preach heresy a hundred years ago[1].' In 1622 he had brought upon the King a storm of unpopularity, and was in a widely-circulated libel declared to be possessed of the cabinet secrets of the Defender of the Faith—of the Papists[2]. His crowning scheme of securing the conversion of the Prince of Wales to Catholicism by exposing him to the influence of the Spanish theologians at Madrid, reveals the full depth of his convictions, together with the defects of his sagacity. By the time of Prince Charles' return home from Spain, public feeling in England had been excited against the unlucky Catholics to such a pitch, that when two or three weeks afterwards a number of worshippers belonging to their communion had lost their lives by the accidental collapse of a floor, burial in consecrated ground was refused to them by order of the Bishop of London[3].

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[1] Gardiner, *u. s.*, vol. iv. p. 266. [2] *Id.*, *ib.*, p. 296 ('*Tom Tell-Truth*').
[3] *Ib.*, vol. v. pp. 142–3. This was towards the end of October, 1623.—

The above outline will suffice to explain the nature of the situation which Middleton's play of *A Game at Chess* was audaciously designed to improve, and the popular welcome which the play received[1]. After repeated attempts to fathom its significance, I can offer no better account of it than the following, for the substance of which I am in part indebted to the ingenuity of other writers[2].

The allegory, which follows a line of fancy not wholly unknown to the Elisabethan drama, although to a playgoer of the earlier Victorian age it recalls forms of theatrical entertainment lying beyond the range of literature, is in its main design clear enough[3]. The Black and the White House—*i.e.* Spain and England—are matched against one another in a game at chess. In the *Induction* Ignatius Loyola wakens up Error, whom he salutes as 'father of

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Gondomar's malign influence is commented on in *Vox Populi, or Count Gondomar's Transactions during his Embassy in England* (1620) and *Part II* of the same composition (1624), by T. S. (Thomas Scott), reprinted, the latter with the addition of some foul verses, in vol. i (all published) of Morgan's *Phoenix Britannicus* (1732). Mr. Bullen, in his prefatory note to *A Game at Chess* (in vol. vii of his edition of *Middleton*), has shown that the author of this comedy was indebted for some of his materials to these tracts, as well as to John Gee's *Foot out of the Snare* (1624), and *New Shreds of the Old Snare* (1624), and to Thomas Robinson's *Anatomy of the English Nunnery at Lisbon* (1622).—An interesting notice of Gondomar and his influence will be found in Jebb's *Life of Nicholas Ferrar*, edited by J. E. B. Mayer (1855), pp. 207–9.

[1] This welcome was long remembered. In Sir William D'Avenant's *The Play-house to be let*, acted 1663 *c.*, the Tire-woman says: 'There's such a crowd at the door, as if we had a new play of *Gundamar*.'—It may be added that about the time of the production of *A Game at Chess* a play called *The Spanish Viceroy* seems to have been performed without the licence of the Master of the Revels, to whom on December 20 the actors had to tender a humble apology (see Cunningham's Introduction to Massinger's *Plays*, p. xi). As to Massinger's supposed authorship of this (non-extant) play, conjectured to have been likewise full of allusions to Gondomar, cf. *infra* under Massinger.

[2] For keys to the principal characters, see Fleay, *u. s.*, pp. 105–6, and more especially the prefatory note by Mr. Bullen already cited. His edition also contains valuable illustrative notes to the play.

[3] See Collier, vol. i. p. 240; *s. a.* 1581: 'A Comodie, or Morall, devised on *A Game of the Cards*, shewed on St. Stephens daie at nighte, before her Majestie at Wyndesor; enacted by the Children of her Majestie's Chapple.'—I seem to remember more than one Pantomime of my earlier days, of which the Induction included a similar fancy, with the 'blows and knocks' incidental to the working-out of it.

Supererogation.' Error summons Loyola to become spectator of a game which he is to regard as a 'dream' or 'vision,' and promptly introduces to his notice the White and Black Houses, with Kings, Queens, Knights, Bishops, Dukes (or Rooks), and Pawns, who appear on the stage 'in order of the game.' The action of the play proper proceeds either in a field between the White and the Black House, or in the latter itself; but, so far as I can perceive, the allegorical use made of the machinery of the game is confined to incidental touches in the course of the action, to the designations of the characters, and to the contrivance of the catastrophe. The discomfiture of the Black House is consummated when the White Knight takes the Black Knight 'by discovery,' and thus checkmates the Black King. The Black King, the Black Queen, and the Black Knight are then consigned to the Bag, where some of the lost pieces—the Fat Bishop and certain lost Black Pawns—already repose. This scene must have excited immense merriment, and have brought a necessarily rather laboured effort to a triumphantly effective conclusion.

The leading characters unmistakeably had in the main a personal intention. The White and Black Kings and Queens respectively are of course the English and Spanish sovereigns; and the designs founded upon the crypto-catholicism of Queen Anne (deceased in 1619) are indicated in no covert terms [1]. The White Knight is Charles Prince of Wales [2], and, unless we follow Mr. Bullen in inverting

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[1] See act iv. sc. 4:

> 'You aim'd at no less person than the Queen,
> The glory of the game; if she were won,
> The way were open to the master-check,' &c.

Mr. Fleay, however, considers the White Queen to signify the English Church.

[2] Clearly the author of this play was innocent of any intention of alluding to any particular associations of chivalry or chivalrous romance, or he might have remembered

> 'Clamydes, the White Knight, son to the King of Suavia land,'

in the old play attributed, on very doubtful evidence, to Peele (cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 375). On the other hand, the astrologer William Lilly's tract. *A Prophecy of the White King and Dreadful Deadman explained,* passages in the first part of which were here applied to Charles I, was not printed till 1644. According to a note to Osborne's *Traditionall Memoyres of the Raigne of King James I,* referring to Lilly's commentary, 'Charles I was said to be these interpretations, the White Duke is Buckingham. The White Bishop may stand for the Archbishop of Canterbury (Abbot), who had taken a prominent part in the public demonstration of joy on the Prince's return from Spain. Of far more interest is the question as to the significance of the White Queen's Pawn, who, like the White Queen herself, has been supposed to be an allegorical representation of the Church of England[1]; but I should rather be inclined to suspect in this character, and the situation in which she is placed, some special reference to an unidentified, and perhaps fictitious, Jesuit intrigue. The White King's Pawn may, in Mr. Bullen's opinion, be safely identified with Sir Toby Matthew, who in 1623 had been sent by King James to Madrid to advise Charles and Buckingham; if so, however, the dramatist abstained from introducing very obvious traits belonging to the original[2]. Among the

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the White King, because, contrary to former usage, he was apparelled in white at the coronation.' See also Gardiner, *History of the Great Civil War*, vol. iii. (1891) p. 598, on the occasion of the burial of King Charles: 'The White King, as men named him—calling to memory the white satin dress in which, unlike his predecessors, he had clothed himself at his coronation, and the omens of disaster which were believed to be connected with the name—was borne to the grave in silence.'

[1] Were Dyce's suggestion to this effect accepted, it would be a curious coincidence that the Black Bishop's Pawn describes (act i. sc. 1) the virtue of this 'daughter of heresy' in words irresistibly recalling Dryden's 'fairest creature of the spotted kind':

'Your merit which through erring ignorance
Appears but spotted righteousness to me.'

[2] The witty and lettered Sir Toby, who was on good terms with both Gondomar and Buckingham, and actively interested in a levelling-up scheme on behalf of the English Catholics, himself ended as a Catholic refugee at Ghent. The discovery that the White King's Pawn is 'black underneath' is therefore appropriate as an allusion to Sir Toby Matthew's conversion.—I had formerly thought that the character might possibly be intended for Somerset, although recognising the difficulty in the way, that Somerset's fall had taken place several years before the production of *A Game at Chess*, and that in 1622 he and his Countess had been allowed to leave their confinement. The White King's speech (act iii. sc. 1) certainly suits the circumstances of Somerset's rise and fall far better than the politico-religious manœuvrings of Sir Toby Matthew, whom moreover the King had knighted only a year before the production of the play and seems to have favoured down to the close of his reign:

'Hath my goodness,
Clemency, love, and favour gracious, rais'd thee
From a condition next to popular labour,

company in the Black House, on the other hand, there can be no mistake as to the Black Bishop being intended for the General of the Jesuits; the Black Bishop's Pawn is a Jesuit agent who has not yet taken the vows; and the Black Queen's Pawn a 'secular Jesuitess,' *i. e.* a female agent of the Order, such a personage as that Donna Luisa de Carvajal over whom, in an early part of the reign, Gondomar extended his aegis, in defiance of both public opinion and the royal authority[1]. It is not clear, however, whether the dramatist had any intentions of personal satire in the case of these minor characters.

The Black Duke, more especially if he be the 'olive-coloured Ganymede' of the last scene of the play—may stand for Philip IV's favourite and chief minister Olivares (Duke of San Lucar[2]). The Black Knight is Gondomar, whom it must have been the author's intention to draw to the life. In order that no mistake may remain, the malady from which Gondomar was known to suffer, and the litter in which it was in consequence his custom to be carried about, are both introduced. For the rest, in details as well as in general features, this sketch corresponds closely enough to what actually remains recorded of its original. The end at which he aims is

'the great work, the main existence,
The hope monarchal[3]'—

and for him there is no repose

'till that great work,
Call'd the possession of the earth, be ours[4].'

Took thee from all the dubitable hazards
Of fortune, her most unsecure adventures,
And grafted thee into a branch of honour,
And dost thou fall from the top-bough by the rottenness
Of thy alone corruption, like a fruit
That's over-ripen'd by the beams of favour?
Let thine own weight reward thee; I've forgot thee:
Integrity of life is so dear to me,
Where I find falsehood or *a crying sin*,
Be it in any whom our grace shines most on,
I'd tear 'em from my heart.'

[1] Gardiner, *English History*, &c., vol. ii. pp. 221 *seqq.*

[2] See act v. sc. 3. This is suggested by Mr. Bullen.

[3] Act i. sc. 1.

[4] Act iii. sc. 1.

He describes with the utmost zest some of his past 'brave designs' towards the accomplishment of this great end—how he procured a fleet

> 'from the White Kingdom to secure our coasts
> Against the infidel pirate, under pretext
> Of more necessitous expedition[1]'—

and how he

> 'made the jails fly open, without miracle,
> And let the locusts out, those dangerous flies,
> Whose property is to burn corn without touching[2].'

The means by which he procures his objects he reveals with no less candour. His main engines are bribes—he has

> 'sold the groom o' the stole six times,
> And receiv'd money of six several ladies
> Ambitious to take place of baronets' wives[3]'—

and plots—when his Pawn tells him one of his plots is discovered he enquires

> 'Which of the twenty thousand and nine hundred
> Four score and five—canst tell?'—

and altogether the caricature is executed with a vigour and fulness which can have left nothing for the bitterest hater of Spain among the spectators to desire[4]. To the Black Knight, the evil genius of the play, the Fat Bishop stands in the relation of a comic foil; and this character again is unmistakeable. He represents one of the strangest figures of a strange time—one of the few converts whom Protestantism has ever made in the person of a prelate of the Church of Rome. Antonio di Dominis, successively Archbishop of Spalato (in Dalmatia) and Dean of Windsor[1], is here ridiculed with savage humour, as a

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[1] Act iii. sc. 1. The allusion is to the Algiers expedition in 1620, the sailing of which was however in reality much against the wishes of Gondomar and his sovereign. Cf. Gardiner, vol. iii. pp. 374 *seqq.*

[2] *i. e.* large numbers of Catholics who were in prison for their religion were set free by Gondomar's intercession in 1622. See Gardiner, vol. iv. p. 349.

[3] Act iv. sc. 2.

[4] The use of the nickname of 'Diegoes' or 'Don Diegoes' as applied to Spaniards in general is anterior in date to Gondomar's arrival in England. Cf. *ante*, p. 469, *note* 1. It seems to have been similarly applied in France. (See Nares' *Glossary*, *sub voce.*) An occurrence to which it is unnecessary to refer gave a specially offensive sound to the name in England.

> 'greasy turncoat gormandising prelate,'

the 'balloon-ball of the churches,' whom, as an utter nuisance to the Black House, the Black Knight causes to be got out of the way by a delusive promise of preferment on the side which he has deserted for the good things of the White House. His behaviour in the Bag at the close of the play is very farcical.

Finally, of the plot of this extraordinary production, it must suffice to say that it divides itself into two parts, one of which is, to me at least, only partially intelligible, while the other, on which the main interest of the piece centres, is clear enough. The former consists of the evil design which it is intended to work upon the lady who is called the White Queen's Pawn. The latter treats of the visit of the White Knight—*i.e.* Prince Charles—and 'his most firm assistant' the White Duke—*i.e.* Buckingham—to the Black House—*i.e.* to Madrid. Here they are sorrily entertained by the Black Court, whose feasts are those of ambition only[1]. They seem entirely to fall in with its ends and ways, till the White Knight suddenly turns round upon his insidious hosts and gives the Black King check by 'discovery.' Hereupon, the White Knight is immediately restored to his father's arms, and after the enemies have been consigned to their doom, the play ends with a joyous welcome on the part of the White King to the hero of the play and of the days in which it was produced :

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[1] I take the substance of the following biographical note from Nichols' *Progresses of James I*, iv. 231; a fuller account will be found in Bishop Goodman's *Court of James I*, but this is not a book to be implicitly trusted. The Archbishop appears to have arrived in England in 1616, and being by the King's special command entertained by the Archbishop of Canterbury, to have at once begun the composition of his book—which was afterwards published in eight languages—giving his reasons for abandoning his see. He remained at Lambeth for some time, and attended the services of the Church of England. As an acknowledgment of the lustre conferred upon the latter by this distinguished convert—who had been educated amongst the Jesuits and been Bishop of Segni before his promotion to an archbishopric—King James bestowed on him the Deanery of Windsor, the Mastership of the Savoy, and a living in Berkshire. In 1622, on the accession to the Papacy of Gregory XIV—an old friend of his—he returned to Rome, much against the wish of King James I, with the hope of becoming a cardinal and contributing to the reformation of the Church which he thus rejoined. But his renunciation was not accepted as complete; he was thrown into prison and died there in 1625. His remains were burnt by order of the Inquisition.—The career of *Di Dominis* is commented on by Gardiner, vol. iv. pp. 282 *seqq.* There seems little doubt that he was a man who greatly over-rated himself; but he or his attitude impressed some capable judges—Sir Henry Wotton among them.

> 'We, winner-like,
> Destroying through heaven's power, what would destroy,
> Welcome our White Knight with loud peals of joy.'

The literary merits of this dramatic allegory are by no means of a high order, and the political views shadowed forth in it are, so far as it is possible to judge, of that reckless sort which usually result from an endeavour to suit the current humour of popular sentiment. But while the historical student will not fail to observe with what strength public opinion must have run in the direction of the sentiments of this piece, for its author to have ventured upon producing it,—and for it to have passed the censorship of the Master of the Revels,—neither will literary criticism pass by unheeded so singular a composition. This play, which Ben Jonson is hardly unjust in alluding to as 'poor[2],' is in fact the solitary work with which the Elisabethan drama fairly attempted to match the political comedies of Aristophanes. No literary species can spring out of the earth in a single day.

Plays conjecturally ascribed to Middleton.

Mention has already been made of the conjectural assignation to Middleton of the comedy of *The Puritan, or The Widow of Watling Street*, which on account of the initials with which it was published in 1606, was at one time ascribed to Shakspere[3]. On the comedy of *A Match at Midnight*, published in 1633 with the initials 'W. R.,' it will be most appropriate to touch when speaking of the plays of William Rowley, who is designated by the initials in question. The suggestion that Middleton was the author of *The Birth of Merlin* need not further detain us[1].

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[1] 'In the large feast of our vast ambition
We count but the White Kingdom, whence you come from,
The garden for our cook to pick his salads,
The food 's lean France, larded with Germany,' &c. (Act v. sc. 3.

[2] *Staple of News*, act iii. sc. 1.

[3] See *ante*, pp. 229 and 230, and *note*.

Middleton's pageants and masques.

Besides his contributions to the literature of the popular stage, Middleton also produced, in addition to a considerable number of City pageants on the usual themes[2], two of the 'toys' (as he calls one of these pieces) in which the courtly society of his age took so great a delight. So far as it is possible to criticise such ephemeral productions as *The Inner-Temple Masque, or Masque of Heroes* (produced in 1619) and *The World Tost at Tennis* (clearly assignable to the following year), they may be said to exhibit an unusual degree of freshness of invention and vivacity of writing. The best thing in the former is 'the last will and testament of Kersmas' [Christmas], who bequeaths his joys and jollities to his children and kinsmen, humorously named after the most popular games at cards. There is much derision of certain restrictions imposed upon festive exuberance, which were doubtless regarded with special disfavour in the Inner Temple Hall. *The World Tost at Tennis*, of which William Rowley was joint author with Middleton[3], is more ambitious in design; the induction (carried on by means of a dialogue between the three favourite royal palaces) is pleasing; but the plot of the masque itself, in which the 'world' is bandied about like a tennis-ball from one to the other profession, till at last it settles firmly and fairly in the grasp of Sovereignty, need not be detailed[4].

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[1] See *ante*, p. 243.

[2] *The Triumphs of Truth, The Triumphs of Love and Antiquity. The Triumphs of Integrity, The Triumphs of Honour and Industry, &c.* His entertainment on the opening of the New River, the work of his celebrated namesake, has been noticed above.

[3] Miss Wiggin considers that the superiority of the versification and the large increase in the proportion of feminine endings observable in the portion of the masque following after the entrance of the Five Starrhes, warrants us in concluding this later part to be Middleton's, and the earlier Rowley's. But, apart from the fact that there is an intermixture of prose, a good deal of unevenness is observable in the versification of the later part.

[4] In W. Alexander (afterwards Earl of Stirling)'s *Alexandraean Tragedy* (1605), act v. sc. 1, Aristotle compares the world to

'a tenis-court
Where fortune doth play states, tosse men for balls.'

The characters are very multifarious, including, besides various allegorical and mythological personages, such old friends as the Devil and the Nine Worthies.

Middleton's merits as a dramatist.

Middleton's rank among our dramatists has been the subject of dispute among the few critics who have hitherto bestowed much attention upon this unduly neglected author; but it is quite unnecessary to construct tables of precedence in surveying any period or department of literature. The modesty with which Middleton himself appears to have abstained from any endeavour to assert his claims to fame or eminence of any kind pleads in his favour, and it may be asserted without fear of objection that he possessed not a few among the many qualities which constitute a dramatist of the order next to the highest. In the works attributed to him which exhibit the nearest approach to tragic power he had the advantage of William Rowley's co-operation; and although it is impossible to determine in each case how much of the result obtained was due to the rough and ready force of his coadjutor and to his trained insight into the theatrical effect of both tragic and comic work, we may at all events conclude that the entire credit of these compositions cannot be attributed to Middleton. He certainly understood the secret of dramatic action, whether serious or comic in the nature of its interest; and upon the whole his plays are strikingly rapid in their movement. It was his usual practice to combine two plots into a single play; and this he ordinarily effected with much constructive skill, although he worked too hurriedly to attend to minor unevennesses, and here and there forgot in his haste to carry out fully the moral lesson which he intended to convey.

What, however, appears to me most notable in Middleton is the absence of effort, which, if combined with a generally true instinct of effect, is a sure sign of genuine artistic power. Something of this may be due to the circumstances of his breeding and training. Apart from the gross indecency which was a characteristic of his times rather than of his class, he writes with the light touch of a well-bred gentleman, and with a habitual grace wanting to the slovenly Dekker on the one hand, and to the pedantic Marston on the other[1]. Both in tragic and in comic composition he was averse to anything like exaggeration, and it is quite possible that the tendency to self-restraint which had become second nature to him at times interfered with the theatrical effectiveness of his work, when unmixed with stimulants of coarser derivation. He seems far from desirous of exhibiting his accomplishments as a reader, although he must have been acquainted with various kinds of literature—thus it is pleasing to note his evident fondness for Chaucer. But while he writes with ease, and while as a rule his versification, which resembles Fletcher's[2], is fluent and his prose style perfectly natural, he cannot be said to show any lack of force, though it is not his way to seek effect from mere strength of phrase. From bombast he is upon the whole singularly free.

His comedies of English life unsurpassed of their kind.

More than ordinarily successful in romantic comedy, at times even here very felicitous in his choice of subjects, he seems to exhibit his full powers when in contact with his native soil[3]. His imagination seems to have been strong enough to penetrate into regions of abnormal passion and of impulses such as seem to swallow up the whole being of man; but, upon the whole, his comedies dealing with the national life of his own age seem most congenial to his gifts, while constituting as a whole the truest dramatic representation of the sphere within which they move. He is less intent upon reproducing strong and enduring types of the Jonsonian kind, than upon drawing faithful pictures of men and manners such as shall in an unlaboured manner bring home the straightforward lessons of morality and virtue which it is in the power of his comic muse to teach. In general, therefore, it is less easy for the reader of Middleton to recall particular characters from his dramas, than to bear witness to the admirable effect created by the *ensemble* of such comedies as *Michaelmas Term*, *A Trick to catch the Old One*, or *A Mad World, my Masters.* If these plays may be taken as fair examples of the comedy of manners which the age enjoyed, and by enjoying acknowledged as true, the most notable significance of Middleton's works in our dramatic literature will become apparent. For his whole genius was free from any tendency to exaggeration, while of his moral aim there is no reason whatever to doubt. It may be questioned whether he was cast in a sufficiently strong mould to impress his age with the purpose which animated his satire; but there is no hollowness about his principles as to the conduct of life, and no unreality about his method of enforcing them. In brilliancy and, regarding his works as a whole, in depth of either pathos or humour he falls below many of his fellow-dramatists; but in lightness, vivacity, and sureness of touch it would be difficult—with one exception always—to name his superior.

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[1] It is difficult, in the same connexion, to resist the testimony, however uncertain it may be, of Middleton's portrait.

[2] Miss Wiggin, who has used this test very effectively in attempting to distinguish between Middleton's and William Rowley's respective shares in the plays of which they were joint authors, points out that 'although Middleton did not use feminine endings and end-stopt lines as freely as Fletcher did, yet he used them freely enough to be regarded as belonging to the same school,' and, like Fletcher, used feminine endings intentionally, constantly adding 'Sir,' 'Madam,' 'my Lord' to an already complete line.

[3] I observe with pleasure that Mr. Swinburne considers Middleton's plays as 'not so properly divisible into tragic and comic as into realistic and romantic' (*u.s.*, p. xvii).

William Rowley 1585 *c.*–1640 *c.*).

To the above notice of Middleton's plays may perhaps be most appropriately appended what little is to be said concerning the dramatic labours of WILLIAM ROWLEY[1], Middleton's most frequent coadjutor in works for the stage. William Rowley, like certain other authors of merit in other departments or periods of our literature, seems to have cared but little for the kind of reputation which is made by the arts of *réclame*. No doubt there is justice in the demand:

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[1] Unfortunately, so far as I know, Mr. A. H. Bullen has not yet carried out his intention of publishing a separate edition of William Rowley's plays. In the meantime, these plays, whether unassisted or assisted, must be sought for piecemeal; and the same necessity would practically remain as to the few existing biographical data concerning him, but for Mr. Thomas Secombe's article on William Rowley in vol. xlix of *The Dictionary of National Biography* (1897).—Mr. Fleay, as already noted, treats William Rowley in conjunction with Middleton. (See *English Drama*, vol. ii. pp. 85 *seqq.*)

> 'In full recompensacioun
> Of good worke, give us good renoun.'

But William Rowley would seem to have been one of that minority among men of letters to whom, even before the days of journalism and its compensations, a personal literary reputation has always been more or less a matter of indifference. At all events, he cared little or nothing for the undivided empire of a title-page. With Middleton, as has been seen, he collaborated in the production of at least four extant pieces, in which the respective share of each author, if determinable at all, can hardly be pronounced upon with certainty, even where the test of versification comes to our aid. So far as this is concerned, there can be no doubt that there are to be distinguished in these joint plays[1] two styles of blank verse, the one rough in form, and remarkably free in the use of unaccented syllables and the inversion of feet, and further marked by a relative paucity of feminine endings,—the other different in each of these respects, and at the same time closely resembling the verse ordinarily employed by Middleton. In Rowley's case, however, the evidence of plays written by him solely, though so far as I am acquainted with it, generally corroborative of the conclusion that in the abovenamed points his verse differed entirely from Middleton's, is at the best insufficient to identify the versification of so productive and accommodating a writer with anything like certainty. The argument therefore must rest in the main upon our knowledge of Middleton[2]. William Rowley is likewise stated to have co-operated as a dramatist with

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[1] *The Spanish Gipsy*, *A Fair Quarrel*, and *The Changeling*; and the masque *The World Tost at Tennis*.

[2] While greatly struck by the ability with which Miss Wiggin has put her case, *u. s.*, I must note that she has left it to her readers to verify William Rowley's style of verse with completeness, and that of the scanty materials which could be used for the purpose part only are at hand. (*A Match at Midnight* is mainly in prose.) But I suspect that her essay contains the root of the matter, although the method of applying *pari passu* the tests of verse and of general dramatic qualities is not free from danger.

Dekker, Thomas Heywood, Day, George Wilkins, Fletcher[1], Webster, and Massinger; although with regard to the last-named two authors modern criticism suggests important modifications of traditional statements. At all events, Langbaine's assertion that Shakspere was associated with William Rowley in the authorship of *The Birth of Merlin* may be summarily rejected. But a ready ear may at the same time be lent to the previous statement of the same chronicler that he was beloved by Shakspere, Fletcher, and Jonson[2], although no evidence is supplied in support of this pleasant tradition.

The date of William Rowley's birth, like that of his death, is quite conjectural. He has been confounded with other bearers of his surname, including the dramatist Samuel Rowley, who may possibly have been his brother; and he was certainly not the Rowley to whom Meres in 1598 referred as excellent in comedy[3]. He must have been connected with the stage for some years previously to his joining the company of actors afterwards known as the Prince of Wales', in which he is from 1610 onwards known to have held a leading position. He appears to have been brought into direct contact with Middleton by the temporary union in 1614 of this company and that of the Princess Elisabeth, for which Middleton had written at least one of his pieces[4]: but their first joint play, *A Fair Quarrel*, was not printed till 1617, or produced before the preceding year. In 1613 and 1614 he had put forth some verse, chiefly as contributions to publications by John Taylor the Water-poet; but after this he seems to have in the main confined himself to dramatic writing[5]. He is supposed to have ceased to appear as an actor before 1629—possibly after Middleton's death in 1627; but of this there is no proof[1]. He married in 1637, at Cripplegate, and no more is heard of him after the publication in 1638 of one of his earlier plays, entitled *A Shoomaker a Gentleman.*

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[1] See below under Fletcher as to *The Maid in the Mill* (acted 1623). The application of the verse test has here been made by Mr. Fleay and Miss Wiggin independently, and with the same results.

[2] *An Account of the Dramatic Poets* (1691), p. 428.

[3] The only Rowley on the registers of Pembroke Hall, the college at Cambridge to which, as Meres adds, the comic dramatist extolled by him belonged, was a Ralph Rowley, afterwards rector of Chelmsford.

[4] *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside.* See Fleay, *u. s.*, pp. 96 and 98.

[5] Not, however, altogether, as would appear from his *Elegy on the Death of Hugh Attwell* (1621). See Mr. Secombe, *u. s.*, where mention is also made of a prose pamphlet on London life by William Rowley, printed in 1609.

His plays.

Not more than four plays are known to have been printed purporting to have been written by William Rowley without the co-operation of another author. The first of these in date of publication is the comedy entitled *A New Wonder, a Woman never Vexed* (printed 1632)[2].

A New Wonder. A Woman Never Vexed (pr. 1632).

This comedy was evidently intended to appeal to the sympathies of the sort of audience for whom plays dealing with traditions of the City of London were as a rule, primarily at all events, designed[3]. It is, however, a noteworthy play, which would of itself prove its author to have been a dramatist deficient neither in skill nor in power. A genuinely dramatic use is made in it of the story of Sir Stephen Foster, as told by Stow, Strype, and other authorities[4]. This City worthy, after having been himself at one time a prisoner in Ludgate, was raised to wealth and honour (he was ultimately elected Lord Mayor) by marriage with a compassionate widow, with whose consent he afterwards became the benefactor of the prison where he had formerly been confined. Rowley has invented the character of the son, who against his father's wish assists his uncle in the season of his troubles, and afterwards succours his father himself when he has in his turn been overtaken by calamity. The character of the widow, whose persistent good fortune resembles the famous Herodotean episode of Polycrates (of which an English version appeared in 1627 in a tract called

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[1] Cf. Fleay, *u. s.*, p. 98.

[2] Reprinted in vol. xii of Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, and in vol. v of *Old English Plays* (1814). The title rather than the subject of the play recalls the ironical assertion of the 'Poticary in John Heywood's *Four P's* (*ante*, vol. i. p. 245, *note* 2).

[3] Mr. Fleay (*u. s.*, p. 193), discerning in it the remains of an old riming play, thinks that Thomas Heywood was the original author.

[4] See Mr. Hazlitt's *Introduction, u. s.*, for these and other sources of the action of the play. This *Introduction* contains a general account of William Rowley's dramatic activity.

Vox Piscis), except in so far that her kindness disarms Nemesis, is likewise an original, though perhaps not a very striking, conception. The pathos is by no means deep, and the humour the reverse of refined; while the change in the disposition of the scapegrace uncle is too sudden to leave any moral impression. But the action as a whole is brisk, the tone healthy, and the writing vigorous[1].

All's Lost by Lust (*pr.* 1633).

In 1633 was printed William Rowley's tragedy of *All's Lost by Lust*, founded on a Spanish story called *The Unfortunate Lovers*. It was revived after the Restoration, when its performance was witnessed by Pepys under unfortunate circumstances[2], and again under the title of *The Conquest of Spain*, an adaptation attributed to Miss Pix, in 1705[3]. In the same year as this sanguinary tragedy was printed the comedy of *A Match at Midnight*[4], which both Mr. Fleay and Mr. Bullen[5] consider to have been altered by Rowley from an original play by Middleton. It must in any case be described as an outrageous farce with an extremely curt moral. Its heroine is a pretended widow, whose pursuers are baffled after five acts of intolerable grossness, unredeemed even by the vivacity and humour which the piece undeniably displays. The Welshman Randall is one of the most amusing specimens of a favourite personage of Elisabethan comedy[6]. Lastly, *A Shoomaker a Gentleman, with the Life and Death of the Cripple that stole the Weather-cock at Paules* (thus runs the full title of the entry in the Stationers' Registers of this exposition of the arts and crafts of City life), was printed in 1638, but acted, as seems certain[7], by 1609. It is stated to be founded on

A Match at Midnight (*pr.* 1633).

A Shoemaker a Gentleman (*pr.* 1638).

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[1] Rowley's comedy was revived at Covent Garden in 1824, with alterations and additions by Planché. See Genest, vol. ix. pp. 299–301.

[2] See *Diary*, March 23, 1661.

[3] Cf. Genest. vol. ii. pp. 330–2, where there is an analysis of both the original, which is described as 'far from a bad play,' and the adaptation. A copy of this play is in the Dyce Library.

[4] Reprinted in vol. xiii of Hazlitt's *Dodsley*.

[5] See his Introduction to Middleton's *Works*, p. lxxix.

[6] Planché's *The Merchant's Wedding* (acted 1828) was founded on Mayne's *City Match* and on Rowley's play. See Genest, vol. ix. pp. 429–30.

[7] Cf. Fleay, *u. s.*, p. 95.

the tract, printed in 1598, of *Crispin and Crispianus, or The History of the Gentle Craft*[1].

It would be worse than pretentious to insist upon the impression conveyed by two of the four plays noticed above, as if it could supply a basis for an opinion concerning William Rowley's distinctive qualities as a dramatist. His name will recur in later pages of this work as that of a co-operator in, or contributor to, not a few noteworthy plays of his age. No doubt can be entertained either as to the flexibility of his genius, or as to the rare vigour which it infused into both his tragic and his comic work. In more than one play in which he had a hand we recognise a perception of theatrical effect that we feel strongly inclined to trace to his co-operation; for a gift of this kind, although it comes by nature. is only perfected by actual and prolonged experience of the stage. A performer—as we know him to have been occasionally—of low comedy parts was not likely as a writer to refine too nicely; but I imagine him to have possessed a sureness of touch which to a dramatist is more than delicacy of pathos or subtlety of wit. Can he, however, be supposed to have worked otherwise than with a brush at times as rough as it was always ready? But to what degree, in enhancing the effect, he occasionally marred the charm of other men's conceptions, and in what measure creations essentially due to his own genius were subjected to analogous treatment at the hands of his coadjutors, are questions which his system of authorship has, for better or for worse, made it impossible definitely to answer.

Samuel Rowley (*d.* 1633 c.)

SAMUEL ROWLEY[2] has been described (by Collier) as a brother of the preceding dramatist; and, although this statement seems unsupported by evidence, the pair have been so frequently confounded with one another, that it may be convenient to notice them side by side. He is mentioned as a member of the Admiral's company in 1598 and 1600[1], and in the intervening year 1599 was specially engaged by Henslowe as his covenanted servant[2], apparently for the reading of plays[3]. On the title-page of his extant Chronicle-History, to be noticed immediately, he describes himself as Servant to the Prince (*i.e.* a member of the company of Henry Prince of Wales); and from the fact that the one other extant play which seems with probability attributable to him is in the Printer's prefatory address *To the Reader* described as '*a Posthumus*,' it would appear that he had died some little time at all events before its publication, three plays having been licensed with his name in the years 1623–4. He is not known to have ever appeared on the stage as an actor.

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[1] For the phrase 'the Gentle Craft.' cf. *ante*, p. 457, *note* 1, as to the sub-title of Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday*.

[2] See Mr. Fleay's *English Drama*, vol. ii. pp. 170–2; Mr. A. H. Bullen's *Introduction* to *The Noble Souldier* in his *Old English Plays*, vol. i (1882), pp. 257–9: and Mr. Sidney Lee's notice of Samuel Rowley in *The Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. xlix (1897).

Besides the two extant plays to be noticed below, several plays to which he was author in whole or in part are known to us in name. Three of these—*Judas*, *Joshua*. and *Sampson*—in one or more of which he was assisted by a playwright-actor whose identity escapes us under the Protean changes of William Bourne, Bird, or Boyle[4], must have been founded on Scriptural subjects. At the opposite end of his dramatic career, so far as it is known to us, were licensed his comedies called respectively *Hard Shifte for Husbands, or Bilboes the Best Blade*, and *A Match or no Match*. *Hymen's Holiday, or Cupid's Fagaries*, performed at Court in 1612, and again in 1633, seems distinctly to be assignable to William Rowley and not to his namesake[5]; the title suggests that it was of the nature of a masque or similar entertainment. Of superior interest, as connected like *When You See Me* both with the general progress of our national historical drama and with Shakspere's contributions to it, is the share claimed for Samuel Rowley in a 'tragedy of *Richard III*[1],' or in a tag to it adumbrated in the sub-title of *The English Profit* (Prophet?) *with the Reformation*, licensed in 1623. He also, in conjunction with the above-mentioned 'Bird,' furnished 'adyciones in *Doctor Fostes*[2],' and may thus almost be said to have completed the cycle of 'general utility' which in his days it was possible to exact from a dramatic author.

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[1] *Henslowe's Diary*, pp. 120 and 218.

[2] *Ib.*, p. 260.

[3] This interpretation is supported by his letters, printed in the *Alleyn Papers* (edited by Collier for the Shakespeare Society, 1843).

[4] Cf. Fleay, *u. s.*, vol. i. p. 33. The play of *Sampson*, which according to *Henslowe's Diary*, p. 224, would seem to have been the joint production of Samuel Rowley and Edward Juby (a member with himself of the Admiral's Company, see *ib.*, p. 218), was probably alluded to in Middleton's *The Family of Love*, act i. sc. 3: 'Believe it, we saw Sampson bear the gate on his own neck from the lower to the upper stage, with that life and admirable accord, that it shall never be equalled, unless the whole new livery of porters set to their shoulders.'

[5] See Fleay, *English Stage*, vol. ii. p. 95.

When You See Me, You Know Me (*pr.* 1605).

When You See Me, You Know Me, or The Famous Chronicle Historie of King Henrie the Eight, with the Birth and Vertuous Life of Edward Prince of Wales[3], printed in 1605 and reprinted in 1613, derives its chief claim to attention from its general identity in subject and partial coincidence in details with Shakspere's *Henry VIII*. Since the date of this Shaksperean, or post-Shaksperean play, cannot be determined with absolute certainty, neither can any fully assured conclusion be reached as to the order of chronological sequence between it and Rowley's play[4]. If Shakspere's *Henry VIII* was produced in an earlier form so soon as 1603, it may have been written as well as brought on the stage before this Chronicle History. (It seems improbable that the latter is *The Enterlude* of *King Henry VIII*, mentioned in the Stationers' Registers, 1605.) If so, the second edition of Rowley's play may have been due to the success of Shakspere's. If, however, as I incline to think, *Henry VIII* was written between 1603 and 1613, and nearer to the later than to the earlier date, then the writer or writers of the Shaksperean play can hardly but have been influenced by Rowley's in the introduction of certain incidents which are common to both, although nearly all of them are to be found in Holinshed. On the other hand, Rowley in all probability derived two passages from *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Merchant of Venice* respectively, both of which comedies were beyond all reasonable doubt of earlier date than his Chronicle History[1]. Little importance attaches to such questions as to priority, inasmuch as neither Rowley nor Shakspere would have hesitated for a moment to appropriate such materials in the way of incidents as commended themselves to their use.

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[1] Cf. *ante*, p. 100.

[2] *Henslowe's Diary*, p. 228.

[3] Edited, with an Introduction and Notes, by Dr. Karl Elze, Dessau and London, 1874.

[4] Cf. *ante*, pp. 202 and 204–5.

Any further comparison between Shakspere's *Henry VIII* and Rowley's play is out of the question; for the latter stands on a level altogether inferior to the former, and indeed absolutely very low, considering the period in which the work was produced. *When You See Me* was performed by the Prince of Wales' company, and was probably meant to secure the favourable attention of the performers' youthful patron by the glory which it seeks to shed on the person of another Prince of Wales of similar promise, whose birth, education[2], and abilities (particularly in the matter of religious controversy) are prominently introduced into the action. For the rest, the play is a bewildering jumble of transposed history and rollicking invention. Cardinal Wolsey's fall is made to take place considerably after Henry's marriage to Catharine Parr; and chronology is throughout treated on the same footing of freedom. The real hero of the play is not so much King Henry himself as Will Summers the Court-fool. The King indeed performs a Haroun-Alraschid-like exploit of visiting the City at night, engages in a personal combat with 'Black Will,' and spends an hour or so in the Counter, while nothing could be in its way more engaging than the frank blusterousness of his manner. But Will Summers, whose figure has already been met with in an earlier play[3], completely rules the roast at King Henry's Court, and is provided with a foil after his own kind in Wolsey's timorous fool Patch. It is hardly worth while to lose more words on this noisy production, which is cheerfully intended to foster contempt of the City, as well as a healthy national prejudice against the Pope and everything that is his. The author succeeds to perfection in depicting King Henry's Court as a bear-garden, where high policy, religious controversy, births, deaths, marriages, and the unsavoury witticisms of Will Summers freely jostle one another; and a full justification is thus furnished of the uncomplimentary combination of epithets by which the *Prologue* to Shakspere's *Henry VIII* seems to characterise Samuel Rowley's play.

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[1] *Viz.* the King's treatment of the page who puts the garter round his leg (cf. *The Taming of the Shrew*, act iv. sc. 1) and a passage in Doctor Tye's eulogy on music (cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, act v. sc. 1). The former of these coincidences is, however, not very striking.

[2] Vicarious in the matter of personal correction, which 'young Edward Browne,' who is knighted for his pains, has to undergo on the Prince's behalf.

[3] Nashe's *Summer's Last Will and Testament*; cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 423. Will's surname is spelt in various ways.

Samuel Rowley and Dekker's (?) *The Noble Soldier* (*pr.* 1634).

It is impossible to determine by internal evidence the question, whether Samuel Rowley was the author of *The Noble Souldier, or A Contract Broken, justly Reveng'd.* This play, of which the running title was *The Noble Spanish Soldier*, and which had been entered in the Registers as by Dekker in 1631 and 1633, was in 1634 printed with the initials S. R.; Mr. Fleay thinks that the original play was written by Dekker and possibly Samuel Rowley, and reclaimed by the latter after Dekker's death (unfortunately the date of this event is uncertain); Mr. Bullen believes it to have been Rowley's, possibly revised by Dekker. More recently, he has conjectured that Day had a hand in the composition[1]. This tragic drama displays a certain savage force which to my mind differs from the rough energy, tempered by snatches of lyric sweetness, so noticeable in Dekker; but it would be rash to draw any conclusions from such an impression. The action as well as the dialogue have a singular tendency to abruptness; but it is by no means certain that this interfered with the theatrical success of the play, which according to the publisher 'received applause' on the stage. The basis of the plot—the sanctity of a pre-contract of marriage, and the punishment justly incurred through the breaking of it—is in itself interesting;

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[1] See below as to Day's *Parliament of Bees*, in which Characters 4 and 5 are taken from *The Noble Soldier*—as Mr. Bullen surmises, having been previously contributed by him to Samuel Rowley's play.

but the guilty deed having been accomplished with sleight-of-hand rapidity in the first act, the rest of the action moves along more accustomed lines, and ends, with a reminiscence of *Hamlet*, by the King's drinking death from the bowl prepared by the Queen for the woman whom they had wronged[1]. The personage who gives his name to this tragic drama, the brave soldier Baltasar, whose unflinching courage induces the King and Queen to select him for the murder of the unhappy Onaelia and her boy, but who proves better than his task, is a semi-comic character not very carefully elaborated; 'Seignior No' is a more or less conventional figure of fun, of which, however, the fun is not very perceptible[2]. Mr. Fleay's notion that an allegorical significance attaches to the play is rather startling—although, so far as her name goes, the wrongs of Ireland would be aptly personified in the heroine of the drama.

Thomas Heywood (1575 *c.*–1650 *c.*)

With the literary careers of Middleton and of William Rowley that of THOMAS HEYWOOD[3] in part coincided; and indeed the length of his life made him the contemporary of nearly all the dramatists mentioned in my next two chapters as well as in the present. But, as will be seen, there are other and more substantial reasons for recognising in him the typical playwright, as well as in more than a single branch of dramatic literature one of the most noteworthy writers of his age.

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[1] The poisoning is accomplished by means of a Spanish fig; and Mr. Fleay (*English Drama*, vol. i. p. 1128) has come to the conclusion that this play and one attributed under the name of *The Spanish Fig* to Dekker are identical.

[2] Cf. below, as to the Dedication of Day's *Humour out of Breath*.

[3] Several of Thomas Heywood's plays were, as will in each case be mentioned, edited for the (Old) Shakespeare Society by the late Mr. Barron Field and by Collier, who contemplated a complete edition of Heywood's extant dramatic works for the Society.—For the text of all the plays known for certain to be his see Pearson's reprint of Heywood's *Dramatic Works*, 6 vols., 1874. For general information concerning his life and writings, and for criticism, see Collier's *Introduction* to his edition of *An Apology for Actors* (*Shakespeare Society's Publications*, 1841); Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. i. pp. 276–306; J. A. Symonds' Introduction to Mr. A. W. Verity's edition of *Select Plays by Thomas Heywood* in the *Mermaid Series*, 1888; in addition to earlier papers in the *Retrospective Review* (1825) and *Edinburgh Review* (1841), and my own notices of Heywood in vol. xxvi (1891) of *The Dictionary of National Biography* and in the Introduction to the edition of *A Woman Killed with Kindness* in *The Temple Dramatists' Series*, 1897.

His life.

The date of Thomas Heywood's birth is quite unknown, but may safely be assigned to some time in or about the year 1575. An incidental reminiscence in the Dedication of one of his plays suggests his having been a gentleman by birth[1]; although, in accordance with the innate modesty which is one of his distinguishing characteristics, he nowhere makes reference to the fact as such. According to his own account[2] he was a native of Lincolnshire. In Bk. i. of his *Apology for Actors* he mentions his residence at Cambridge; and we have it on the authority of the bookseller and actor William Cartwright, writing in 1658[3], that Heywood was a fellow of Peterhouse. I am unable to adduce any further evidence in support of a tradition cherished to this day in the most ancient of Cambridge Colleges[4].

By the year 1596, as we learn from an entry in Henslowe's *Diary*, he had already written a play, or was occupied with the writing of one; and in 1598 he is mentioned by the manager as a regular member, and presumably (no wages being noted), a sharer in the Lord Admiral's company[5]. He seems afterwards to have been for a time an actor in the service of the Earl of Southampton[1]; and his *Edward IV* was played several times by the servants of the Earl of Derby[2]. He subsequently joined the company belonging to the Earl of Worcester, which on the accession of James I assumed the designation of Queen's Servants, and performed at the Red Bull and the Cockpit[3]. He seems to have re-entered the service of the Earl of Worcester on the death of Queen Anne, whose funeral he had attended as 'one of her Majesty's players,' and the loss of whom he lamented in an Ode published five years later. It is not known how long he continued to appear as a performer upon the stage; but his loyalty to the 'quality' or profession with which he was identified, is shown by the tract which he published, in 1612, in defence of its antiquity and dignity, and in furtherance of its 'true use.' The circumstances are unknown that led to the composition of this treatise, of which the most striking part consists in the attempt to show by example the direct influence of stage-plays for good; but it is pleasing to find that in the *Refutation* published by 'J. G.' in 1615, amidst much dire invective against the profession of 'M. Actor,' Heywood's personal character is left unassailed.

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[1] *The English Traveller* is dedicated to Sir Richard Appleton, Bart., between whom and 'that good old Gentleman, mine unkle (Master Edmund Heywood),' the writer says that 'frequent curtesies interchangably past.'—There is no trace of any relationship between Thomas and John Heywood, the author of the *Interludes* (*ante*, vol. i. pp. 238 *seqq.*).

[2] In his verses prefixed to James Yorke's *Book of Heraldry*; cf. his funeral elegy on Sir George St. Poole in *Pleasant Dialogues and Dramas*, (1637).

[3] In the Dedication prefixed to his edition of the *Apology* published in that year under the title of *The Actor's Vindication*.

[4] A close search, kindly instituted for me by Dr. Porter, the present Master of Peterhouse, failed to result in the discovery of any trace of Heywood in the archives of the College. Nor is there any such in the University Registers; so that it may at all events be assumed as certain that he never took a degree at Cambridge.—In his *If you know not Me, &c.*, and *The Fair Maid of the West* there are traces of a certain kind of local knowledge suggestive of a personal experience of Cambridge life; and in his *Wise Woman of Hogsdon* (act iv. sc. 1) Sencer, who I regret to say cannot be described as a highly respectable character, says: '*Petrus domist securus*: I was Sir of Peter house.'

[5] Henslowe's *Diary*, pp. 78, 260. These data sufficiently tally with his

His Apology for Actors (1612).

His activity and fertility as a playwright.

As to Heywood himself, one might at first sight be inclined to conclude that the theatre was all in all to him. It seemed in his eyes (as he says in the vigorous lines, *The Author to his Booke*, prefixed to *The Apology*) a world in itself; and within its circumference his ambition as a dramatist actually found its limits. He repeatedly professes

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statement in the Preface to *The Four Prentices of London* (printed 1615) that this play was written 'many years since, in my infancy of judgment in this kind of poetry, and my first practice,' and that it was in fashion, 'as plays were then, some fifteen or sixteen years ago.' See also Collier, vol. iii. p. 87, *note*, as to the actors mentioned by Heywood as of or before his time, in his *Apology for Actors*.

[1] See the citation, in the *Introduction* to Collier's edition of that tract, from Heywood's elegy on James I.

[2] See, however, Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. i. pp. 288–9.

[3] See the document licensing 'Thomas Hawood' and others as 'seruants unto our dear wise Quen Anne,' Collier, vol. i. pp. 336–7. To Worcester he dedicated his *Nine Books, &c., concerning Women* (1624).

his indifference to the success which his plays may be destined to obtain, and to the reputation which they may bring to him, as mere literary compositions; he abstained from collecting them (which indeed would have been a Herculean task), and when he supervised their publication, did so in self-defence rather than from choice[1]. His plays were, in a word, written to be acted, and with no other or secondary purpose. To the productivity of a dramatist who proceeds on this principle there are no bounds except those which are imposed upon all human effort. 'Sosicles, of Syracuse, gained seven victories, and wrote seventy-three tragedies.' Eubulus, Antiphanes, and Alexis among them contributed more than six hundred plays to the list of those included in Middle Comedy[2]. Lope de Vega wrote at least one thousand five hundred plays, of which only the 'minima parte,' according to his own account, were ever printed[3]. Similar feats, though hardly any to equal this, could no doubt be quoted of other 'heroes in fertility[4]' of dramatic production besides these; but in the case of Heywood, at all events, there is no reason to doubt his statement,—made before the close of his career as a playwright, in 1633,—that he had had 'either an entire hand, or at the least a main finger' in two hundred and twenty plays[5]. As a matter of course, he attempted nearly every species of drama known to the stage.

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[1] See the address *To the Reader*, prefixed to *The Rape of Lucrece*, which went through five editions in thirty years, where he states that his reason for publishing some of his plays was to guard against 'corrupt and mangled' editions, 'copied only by the ear'; and cf. the *Prologue* to *If you know Me. &c.* In the address *To the Reader* prefixed to *The English Traveller*, he disclaims any ambition 'to be, in this kind, voluminously read,' and, with an apparent allusion to Ben Jonson, expresses himself unwilling that his plays should be collected 'to beare the title of *Workes* (as others).' In the address before the *Apology* he even asserts, with imperfect accuracy, that his pen 'hath seldom appeared in presse till now.' See also the address before *The Fair Maid of the West.*

[2] Donaldson, *Theatre of the Greeks*, pp. 163, 196.

[3] According to Lord Holland, the number of lines by Lope de Vega said to be actually printed amounts to 21,300,000. But this would include many other besides dramatic productions; and Lord Holland, who suspected the truth of some of the Spanish estimates, is himself suspected of an excess of credulity by G. H. Lewes (*The Spanish Drama*, p. 65).

[4] Platen in *Die Verhängnissvolle Gabel* (of Kotzebue)—

'Und war ein Held an Fruchtbarkeit, gleich Calderon und Lope.'

[5] See address *To the Reader* prefixed to *The English Traveller.* According

His non-dramatic works.

His literary activity was not, however, exhausted by his labours in this direction. Besides Lord Mayor's pageants (of which he composed a whole series between the years 1631 and 1639) and other entertainments, besides prologues and epilogues for the plays of his fellow-dramatists as well as his own, and besides dramatic or quasi-dramatic selections from authors ancient or modern [1], he composed, more especially in his later years, various works unconnected with the theatre. Previously to the publication of the *Apology for Actors* he had printed a long heroic poem entitled *Troicus Britannicus*, or *Great Britain's Troy* (1609), that sets out in the wanton paths of Greek mythology, and ends with the pedigree of James the Sixth; and in the decline of his days he put forth, with engravings of which admiring friends defrayed the cost, a didactic poem in nine books entitled *The Hierarchy of the Blessed Angels* (1635). The rest of his verse was occasional [2]. In prose, he put forth besides a translation of Sallust (1608), and the *Apology* already repeatedly referred to, the *Nine Books of Women* [3] (1624, reprinted in 1657 under the still more alarming title of *The General History of Women*); an account of *England's Elisabeth* during the years previous to her accession (1631), and (to omit minor contributions to historical and archaeological literature) another Plutarchian effort in honour of

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to the bookseller Kirkman, cited by Symonds, *u.s.*, p. ix, Heywood not only acted every day, but also obliged himself—something like the late Anthony Trollope—to write a sheet every day for several years together. Kirkman adds that of Heywood's plays, written as they often were in the tavern on the back of tavern-bills, many were, perhaps for that reason, lost.

[1] It was probably the *Pleasant Dialogues and Dramas selected out of Lucian*, Erasmus, and other Classical or Renascence writers, and printed by Heywood in 1637 together with a general gathering from his 'collections and recollections,' that suggested to Shakerley Marmion the lines in recognition of Heywood's multifarious literary activity to be found in vol. i. of Pearson's reprint.

[2] It included a Funeral Elegy on the Death of Prince Henry (1613). His *Marriage Triumph* for the wedding of the Prince's sister will be noted below.

[3] Referred to in Fletcher and Shirley's *Night-Walker* (act iii. sc. 3) as 'a little, very little book of good and godly women.'

the female worthies of the world—nine in number, three of them Jews, three Gentiles, and three Christians (1640). There can be little doubt but that in his later days he had from necessity rather than from choice transferred his pen into the service of the booksellers. His last known publication was the *Life of Ambrosius Martin*, printed in 1641. His design of writing 'the Lives of all the Poets, from the first before Homer' to the last contemporary with himself, he never carried out; its concluding chapter might have consoled us for much previous matter. He is mentioned as still alive in 1648[1]; so that his life from the time of his arrival in London onward spans the history of the English drama during its infinitely most important half century.

His extant plays.

The extant plays of Thomas Heywood it would not be easy to group with any actual precision. They will, however, be found to include Chronicle Histories, in a style taking us back beyond Shakspere to his predecessors; romantic dramas on themes partly of an earlier but more especially of a later type, in which subjects taken from contemporary life abroad or at home occupy the place of plots derived from story-books; comedies treating of events, or descriptive of the manners, of the author's own day; a series of mythological plays; and one or two examples of a mixture of species which it is quite needless to examine except from the point of view of their individual value. In some such sequence, without any strict adherence to their chronological order of succession, in so far as this is ascertainable, I proceed briefly to review the dramatic work left to us from this author's indefatigable hand.

Chronicle Histories.

Two of Heywood's plays (each in two Parts) are in construction and manner specimens of the slow-dying growth of the Chronicle History; but in the form in which they have come down to us, one of the pair is far superior to the other in vigour and freshness.

Edward IV (pr. 1600).

Of its kind nothing could be better than *The First and Second Parts of King Edward IV, containing his merie*

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[1] In *The Satire against Separatists*, cited in Collier's *Introduction* to the *Apology*, p. xiv.

pastime with the Tanner of Tamworth, as also his love to faire Mistrisse Shore, her great promotion, fall and miserie, and lastly the lamentable death of both her and her husband; likewise the besieging of London, by the Bastard Falconbridge, and the valiant defence of the same by the Lord Maior and the Citizens (printed in 1600)[1]. The several heads of this comprehensive title (of which the last is of course treated first) exhaust the main elements of the action of this play, which consists of a long succession of scenes, almost uniformly written with great spirit. Although therefore no attempt is made towards symmetrical construction, and in at least one instance resort is had to an old expedient for lightening the difficulties of the stage[2], yet the author contrives to draw a variety of characters with much direct force. From the dissolute King and his villainous brother Gloster (most of whose traditional infamies, together with those of his agent Dr. Shaw, are set forth in the most explicit manner), down to the honest Hobs, the tanner of Tamworth, a figure borrowed from an old ballad and developed into one of the freshest characters of its kind in the Elisabethan drama, all the personages crowded into the action are living realities[3]. The story of the erring but gentle-hearted Jane Shore, whose fault is redeemed by her modest and charitable bearing in her brief period of grandeur together with her repentance after her downfall, is treated with a homely tenderness before which all censure breaks down. The general details of this episode are taken from another old ballad, although the incident of the husband's return and association in death with his unhappy wife seems to be an ingenious invention of the dramatist's[1]. The pathos in these scenes, and in particular turns of the diction[2], is of a very simple, yet also of a very wholesome sort, which doubtless went home to the audience. In Jane's speech at the commencement of her penance there is real power; while the little scene where the young princes say their prayers in the Tower is genuinely affecting. A direct appeal to the associations or sympathies of the City of London is never foregone where it can be advantageously introduced[3]. In spite of its rude form, this play in the conduct of its action, as well as in mere details, shows a strong instinctive perception of dramatic effect[4]; and the

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[1] Edited for the *Shakespeare Society's Publications* (1842) by Barron Field.

[2] In *Part II* a Chorus is suddenly introduced in order to bring the action home again from France.

[3] The ballad of *King Edward IV and the Tanner of Tamworth* is printed in Percy's *Reliques*. There is a genuine, and thoroughly effective, popular ring in the scenes (in *Part I* of the play), where the King in disguise seeks to find out the political opinions of the tanner, and where Hobs entertains the King at his homely board with 'a good barley bag-pudding, a piece of fat bacon, a good cow-heel, a hard cheese, and a brown loaf,' together with a 'three man's song' of the battle of Agincourt, and in the extremely characteristic scene where he proves his loyalty on the occasion of a county-meeting for the grant of a benevolence. Hobs' account of his difficulty as to matters of State is probably a very fair representation of the condition of the popular mind at large in the times of the Roses: 'By my troth, I know not when I speak treason, when I do not. There's such halting betwixt two Kings, that a man cannot go upright, but he shall offend t' one of them. I would God had them both for me.' Upon the whole however his jovial disposition seems even *a priori* to incline him to the 'frank fanion' of the House of York; for King Harry, he has heard say, is 'a very advowtry man.'

[1] The ballad of *Jane Shore* will be found in Percy's *Reliques*. (The Jane Shore of history survived King Edward IV for thirty years—but the melancholy irony of dates is beyond the reach of the drama.) The personality of Jane had acquired an additional popularity from Churchyard's Legend of *Shore's Wife* in the *Mirror for Magistrates* (cf. *The Returne from Parnassus, Part III*, act i. sc. 2); she also appears in a few scenes of *The True Tragedie of Richard III* (1594; cf. *ante*, p. 97). A play entitled *Jane Shore* by Chettle and Day was acted at the Rose in 1602; it is either to this play or to his own that Heywood refers in *The Apology for Actors*, Bk. iii. p. 57. According to Genest, vol. ix. p. 452, the 1602 *Jane Shore* is alluded to in the Prologue to Lacy's *Dumb Lady* (1669); but the mention of 'the pudding' seems to point to Heywood's play, the popularity of which is further attested by a reference to it in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Knight of the Burning Pestle* (1611). Rowe's *Jane Shore* (1714; *vide infra*) exhibits, so far as I can see, no trace of a connexion with Heywood's play.

[2] 'The sweet forsaken soul';—'Pity that e'er awry she trod her shoe.'

[3] *Part I* repeatedly flatters the pride of the City, which is apostrophised as 'Troy'; nor are its 'prentices forgotten, who can well afford to bear the *sobriquet* of 'flatcaps.' The foundation of Crosbie House by Lord Mayor Crosbie receives special commemoration. In *Part II*, Jane Shore, when brought in her white sheet to Aldersgate, bids farewell to London, whose flints (we call to mind De Quincey's 'endless terraces of Oxford Street') have punished her pride.

[4] Mrs. Blague, who tempts Jane to evil and whom in the depth of her misery she forgives, is an effective character; on the other hand the scene in the middle of *Part II*, between the Queen and the Mistress passes the

touch of nature is present which atones for both crudities and conventionalities.

If You know not Me, &c. (*Part I* *pr.* 1605; *Part II* *pr.* 1606).

A far more qualified praise is all that can be given to the play, *If You know not Me, you know no Bodie, or, The Troubles of Queen Elizabeth*[1] (of which the First Part was printed in 1605, and the Second in 1606, both being repeatedly republished during the author's lifetime). The odd title seems to have been suggested by the answer made in the course of the play itself (*Part II*) by old Hobson to the Queen's query 'what art you?' The construction is quite as inartificial as that of *Edward IV*, and the conduct of the action by no means conveys the same impression of dramatic ability. The *First Part* is, however, superior to its successor. Although in general it accompanies without much attempt at discriminative selection the narrative of the fortunes of the Princess Elisabeth from Queen Mary's accession to her own, as it came to the author's hand from the authorities at his disposal—Stow and the rest—it cannot be said to be devoid of occasional touches either of pathos or of humour. Our hearts cannot remain altogether irresponsive to the oscillations ''twixt axe and crown' of the destinies of the true-hearted princess, helpless '*tanquam Ovis*' in the hands of her adversaries, and her concluding address to the English Bible has at least the

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borders of false sentiment.—In *Edward IV* Heywood already resorts to the familiar stage-trick of attaching a telling catchword to a humorous character. Maister Josselin's 'and so forth,' whereby he is in the habit of indicating more than he can express, being 'somewhat defective in his utterance,' is an excellent notion, although repeated with unconscionable frequency. So in *If You know not Me, &c.*, Hobson is continually found affirming by means of the phrase 'bones a' me'; when he rises to 'body a' me,' he explains that he 'swears not every day.' So again, in *The Fair Maid of the Exchange*, Master Flower can hardly open his mouth without the phrase 'It is a good conceit.'

[1] Edited by Collier in the *Shakespeare Society's Publications*, 1851.—In the Prologue to the play of *Queen Elizabeth*, as revived at the Cockpit probably about 1631 (*Part I* was reprinted in 1632), Heywood prefers the curious charge that it was printed from a 'plot' or outline drawn 'by Stenography,' but so as to leave 'scarce one word trew.' He professes to have put it 'upright upon its feete'; but though he made some additions to the 1633 edition of *Part II*, he seems to have spent no care on the printing.—The *Prologue* and *Epilogue* were published by Heywood in his *Pleasant Dialogues and Dramas* (1637).

true Protestant ring[1]. Here and there too the dramatist shows characteristic humour in sketching personages taken direct from common life, such as the three 'white-coat' soldiers intent upon avoiding converse on State-affairs. In *Part II.* however, the design of the play becomes narrowed, and we are altogether carried away from the affairs of the nation to the civic traditions of London. The action occupies itself with a laborious dramatisation of the foundation of the Royal Exchange by the typical London merchant, Sir Thomas Gresham[2], together with that of his—unhappily abortive—College, a measure of enlivenment being supplied by the misdoings of this worthy's scapegrace nephew, and by the humours of Master Hobson, whom his customary expletives enable to speak as candidly as he thinks. In the end it returns to matters of more general interest, and in a brief succession of scenes spins off Parry's plot and the overthrow of the Invincible Armada[3]. The progress of the play is helped along in its *First Part* by dumb-shows, and in the *Second* by the obligate intervention of a Chorus.

The Four Prentices of London (*pr.* 1603).

The Four Prentices of London, with the Conquest of Jerusalem (printed 1615, but first put on the stage 'some fifteen or sixteen years' earlier, as appears from the author's deprecatory preface), claims attention chiefly as Heywood's 'first practice' in the capacity of a playwright[4]: and it is in truth a production of primitive simplicity. In this dramatisation of some old narrative, founded more or less on Tasso's poem and Fuller's *History of the Holy*

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[1] Heywood's prose narrative of Elisabeth's earlier years, noticed above, contains passages parallel to some in the play (see Collier's edition).

[2] Also alluded to in the *Induction* to Beaumont and Fletcher's *Knight of the Burning Pestle.*

[3] If in the Queen's reception at Tilbury of the news, arriving post upon post, of the defeat of the Armada, we are reminded of the *Persae*, the resemblance cannot be said to be one of either treatment or effect.—The long reference to Stukeley is noticeable in connexion with *The Battle of Alcazar* (*ante*, vol. i. pp. 370 *sqq.*).

[4] The conjecture of Collier that the 'four lances for the comody of Thomas Hewodes and Mr. Smythes' noted in Henslowe's *Diary* (p. 238) as paid for on September 3, 1602, were for the apprentices in this play, seems highly probable (see his note).—This is the only indication of Wentworth Smith having had any concern in *The Four Prentices.*

Warre[1], it may be read how 'the olde Earle of Bulloign' had four sons, whom in his straits he apprenticed to four honourable trades in the city of London. How the four sons sought their fortunes in a ship bound for Jerusalem, but how by divers strange accidents they were carried, the one to Spain, the second to France, the third to Italy, the fourth to Ireland. How their sister likewise went forth disguised as a page. How the brothers, after undergoing adventures of the most stirring sort, all meet their sister and their father at the siege of Jerusalem, and finally obtain at its capture four royal crowns, thus doing their utmost, as their parent observes at the close, to make his 'joys,' and those of the audience, 'mere comical[2].'

The Royal King and the Loyal Subject (*pr.* 1637.)

One of Heywood's best-known plays is *The Royall King and the Loyall Subject*[3], printed in 1637, but, as appears from the very noteworthy *Epilogue*, written at an early period in its author's career—Collier thinks shortly before 1600[4]. The

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[1] 'Our Authority,' says one of the 'three in black clokes,' who speak the Prologue, 'is a Manuscript, a Booke writ in parchment; which not being publicke, nor generall in the Worlde' was thought preferable to an ordinary winter's tale.

[2] As to the ridicule cast upon this play, as the type of the favourite kind of City drama, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Knight of the Burning Pestle, vide infra.*

[3] Edited by Collier for the *Shakespeare Society's Publications* (1850).

[4] In this *Epilogue* the author confesses 'that this play's old,' and reminds the Reader that

> 'We know (and not long since) there was a time
> Strong lines were not look'd after, but if rhyme,
> Oh then 'twas excellent.'

This, he adds, was in the days when doublets with big sleeves and trunk-hose 'were all in fashion.' The piece cannot therefore have been written at a date far removed from the turn of the century, and this agrees with a quotation in Fairholt's *Costume in England,* p. 217, showing trunk-hose to have been the mode in 1601.—Mr. Fleay, however (*English Drama*, vol. i. pp. 300-1), contends that this play was a revival, probably about 1633, of the play called *Marshal Osrick,* written by Heywood in conjunction with Wentworth Smith and produced on the stage in 1602. He accounts for the statement of the *Epilogue* on the ground that this was a stock epilogue tacked on to any old play, and actually so appended to Henry Shirley's *Martyred Soldier* (printed 1638). Heywood's *Royal King and Loyal Subject* he supposes to have been produced in consequence of the revival in 1633 of Fletcher's *Loyal Subject.* As a matter of fact the latter play, while dealing with the same story as Heywood's, is entirely different in treatment; so that both must be concluded to have been founded on the same narrative, of hero of the drama is a kind of Patient Grissel of magnanimous loyalty, although the fine sensitiveness within him which revolts against whatever touches his honour forms an impressive feature of the character, and the succession of tests undergone by his all-enduring generous fidelity is admirably contrived, at least up to the end of the fourth act. The climax ought to have consisted in the Marshal's gift of the royal infant[1]; unfortunately, however, the author's inventive power deserts him before the close, and the fifth act, by adding another and superfluous step to the previous series, weakens the impression of the whole. As in several of Heywood's plays, so in this we recognise a fine conception, together with evidence of a considerable insight into dramatic effect, but very few touches of poetic feeling proper, such as the subject furnished many opportunities for introducing. The bye-plot of the captain who tests the genuineness of his friends and of society in general by an assumption of poverty, displays shrewd knowledge of the world, but is carried out with some gratuitous coarseness, thus marring the self-consistency of a play noble in its general design and execution, and in which the *Prologue* had promised that

'Though nothing please, yet nothing shall offend.'

We pass to a different variety of the romantic drama, and

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which the origin has been found in one of Bandello's novels, translated in Paynter's *Palace of Pleasure*. This discovery is due to Dr. Koeppel. See the Appendix to his *Quellenstudien zu den Dramen Ben Jonson's, &c.* (1895), pp. 133-5. He cites, as directly corresponding to Paynter's prose, the symbolical 'Persian History' narrated in act v. sc. 2, how

'The great Sophy, once
Flying a noble Falcon at the Herne,
In comes by chance an Eagle sousing by,
Which when the Hawk espies, leaves her first game
And boldly ventures on the King of birds.
Long tugg'd they in the air, till at the length
The Falcon, better breath'd, seiz'd on the Eagle
And struck it dead.'

This discovery renders the unsatisfactory 'historical' speculations by the editor of Old Plays (Continuator of Dodsley) wholly idle.

[1] As it does in Grillparzer's *Ein treuer Diener seines Herrn*, the subject of which he took from the legend of the Palatine Bancbanus. See his *Selbstbiographie*, in *Werke* (Stuttgart, 1874), vol. x. p. 181 (the play will be found in vol. iv).

A Woman Killed with Kindness.

to one in which Thomas Heywood achieved perhaps his most memorable success, in *A Woman Kilde with Kindnesse*[1]. This celebrated domestic drama was certainly acted as early as 1603[2]—whether before or after *The Royal King and the Loyal Subject* is unknown—although not printed till 1607; a third edition appeared in 1617. The popularity of the play is further shown by the allusions to it in contemporary literature[3]; and a personage in one of Heywood's own later plays quotes 'the Woman Killed with Kindness' as a type, something in the way in which Don Giovanni recognises an air from the *Marriage of Figaro*[4]. The title of the play seems, however, to be older than the play itself, and to have been used as a quasi-proverbial expression[5].

The *Prologue* to Heywood's play dwells with special emphasis on the 'barrenness'—*i. e.* humility—of its subject and scene. but trusts its fortunes to the 'gentle thoughts'—one might say the sentimental sympathy of the spectators. Thus we have here. on the author's own showing, a domestic drama of sentiment; and though it would be manifestly unsafe to assert this to have been the earliest play of its kind in our literature, yet it is alike the earliest and most notable example of an Elisabethan domestic drama which instead of merely contenting itself with the dramatisation of a striking occurrence, or series of occurrences in real life[1], elaborates its action with fulness and care. The sentiment, moreover, which pervades this action is at once so tender and so deep as to seem to savour of a more refined age than that which produced the play. Heywood himself—except perhaps in *The English Traveller*—cannot be said to have in any other of his plays appealed with the same dramatic force and the same delicacy of touch to the responsive 'kindness' which is to be found in all human hearts.

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[1] Edited, from the third edition, by Collier for the *Shakespeare Society's Publications*, 1850. See also Mr. A. W. Verity's excellent edition in the *Mermaid Series*, and the present writer's in *The Temple Dramatists' Series* (1897), where the notes are confined to the allusions to old dance-tunes (act i. sc. 2), the sport of hawking (act i. sc. 3), and games at cards (act iii. sc. 2). The late Mr. Frank Marshall prepared an acting edition of this play for performance by the Dramatic Students' Society in London on March 8, 1887.

[2] See *Henslowe's Diary*, pp. 249-50.

[3] See especially Middleton's tract *The Black Book* (1604), which directly attests the popularity of the play in the City; also Fletcher's *The Woman's Prize* (revived 1633). In Fletcher and Shirley's *The Night-Walker* (1634), the phrase of the title is used ironically in a more general way. An allusion to both phrase and play occurs in Farquhar's *Love and a Bottle* (1698), act iii. sc. 1.

[4] In *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon*, act iii. sc. 2, Young Chartley stops the tears of the father of a girl whom he has wronged, with 'Peace, fool! we shall else have thee claim kindred of the woman killed with kindness.'

[5] See *The Taming of the Shrew*, act iv. sc. 2, where Petruchio expounds:

'This is the way to kill a wife with kindness.'

Nothing could be simpler than the story; nor is there much need for enquiring whence the author derived the suggestion of his tale of woe[2]. 'Master Frankford,' a country gentleman whose honourably trustful character is indicated by his name, is at the beginning of the play introduced as the happy bridegroom of a 'perfect' bride. But the fair promise of his wedded life is rudely blasted by the treachery of a guest on whom he has heaped every proof of friendship and of hospitality. Mistress Frankford, misled by weakness rather than by a disposition to sin[3], is discovered by her husband in her lover's arms; but instead of avenging her guilt by taking her life, he resolves to 'kill her even with kindness.' He sends her with every provision for her comfort to a solitary manor-house, enjoining on her the one prohibition that she is never to look again on him or on her children. In her solitude and remorse, her heart breaks[1]; she sends for her husband to crave his forgiveness on her deathbed, and dies blessed by the lips of him whom she had irremediably wronged.

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[1] In several of these, as will be seen by a reference to the section in my previous chapter treating of plays attributed to Shakspere, he had, or has been supposed to have had, a hand. Among them are notable instances of a sort of sub-species, the criminal (or, more properly speaking, murderous) domestic drama, in vogue, as it would seem, in the last decade of the sixteenth and the first of the seventeenth century, to which periods *Arden of Feversham* and *The Yorkshire Tragedy* are supposed respectively to belong.

[2] Koeppel, *u. s.*, p. 136, shows it to be not unlikely that the suggestion of the earlier but least essential part of the story was due to the fifty-eighth novel in bk. i. of Paynter's *Palace of Pleasure.*

[3] How finely is this touched :

'What shall I say?
My soul is wandering, and hath lost her way.
Oh, Master Wendoll! Oh!' (Act ii. sc. 3.)

The exquisite pathos of this play is not more striking than the true manliness of its tone. While we pity the weakness of the erring wife even in her fall, we are conscious that the punishment inflicted on her is true justice. In the scene where, after having been apprised of her infidelity, her husband watches her demeanour and that of her paramour, we are perhaps to some extent distracted by the cleverness of the dialogue accompanying the situation[2]. But the subsequent scene of the actual discovery is thrilling in its power. The terrible suspense of the situation, as the husband accompanied by a faithful servant returns under cover of the night to his polluted home, there to surprise his guilty wife, has few parallels in the Elisabethan drama; it might almost be described as a 'prose' reproduction of some of the terrors of *Macbeth*[3]. I am inclined to think that the effect of Frankford's mercy towards his wife is weakened by his having allowed the escape of her seducer, who might have been got rid of without the two men being brought into contact; but the anguish of the scenes between husband and wife is overpowering, while the profoundest depths of pathos are reached in the closing passages of the play, which applies, as it were with a trembling hand, the Christian solution of forgiveness to the awful problem of the consequence of sin[4].

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[1] '*Anne.* I know the Lute; oft have I sung to thee;
We both are out of tune, both out of tune.'
(Act v. sc. 3.)

[2] See act iii. sc. 2 (the card-playing scene).

[3] '*Frank.* . . . Hear'st thou no noise?
Nic. Hear? I hear nothing but the owl and you.
Frank. So; now my watch's hand points upon twelve,
And it is dead midnight; where are my keys?
(Act iv. sc. 4.)

[4] '*Anne.* . . . . . .
Faintness hath so usurp'd upon my knees,
That kneel I cannot; but on my heart's knees
My prostrate soul lies thrown down at your feet
To beg your gracious pardon. Pardon, oh, pardon me!
Frank. As freely, from the low depth of my soul,

There seems no necessity for saying more as to the moral effect of this drama, which, unlike so many modern plays bearing a superficial resemblance to it, makes no attempt to treat guilt as something that can be wiped away by suffering, and carefully guards the limits of the lesson that it conveys. The play has a bye-plot, beginning with a quarrel between two country gentlemen over a hawking match, which leads to the imprisonment and ruin of the one at the suit of the other; but in the end all ends happily by means of a love-match between the oppressor and the sister of his victim. Although here and there unpleasant, it is in part not ineffectively worked out, but its interest is quite secondary to that of the main plot, in the pathetic close of which all else is forgotten[1].

The English Traveller (*pr.* 1633).

I am tempted to offend against considerations of chronology in noticing immediately by the side of Heywood's most celebrated play, another drama of his akin to it both in general tone and manner, and in the refined purity of the moral spirit pervading it. *The English Traveller*, printed in 1633,—there is no satisfactory clue to the date of its composition,—is a drama of domestic incident; and in the Prologue the author takes pride in the production of a play without dumb-show, combat, marriage, or so much as song, dance or masque, to 'bumbaste' it out. The interest of the main plot is however sufficient in itself, and the character of its hero, Young Geraldine, is drawn with much grace and feeling; he is assuredly one of the truest gentlemen of Elisabethan comedy[2]. Having become endeared to the old husband of a young wife, he has vowed to maintain towards her during the remainder of her husband's life a relation of pure friendship, to be exchanged for union in marriage should they jointly survive him. Young

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As my Redeemer hath forgiven His death,
I pardon thee. I will shed tears for thee;
Pray with thee; and in mere pity of thy weak nature
I'll wish to die with thee.' (Act v. sc. 3.)

[1] The *exit* of Wendoll (act v. sc. 3), who resolves to travel with a view to learning foreign languages, so as to obtain a good place at court, is not inappropriate to a drama designed to uphold domestic ideals of happiness.

[2] I do not deny that Goethe's Mephistopheles might have found reason for saluting him as a 'supra-sensually sensual wooer.'

Geraldine having received from his friend Dalavill reports as to scandal having arisen concerning his behaviour towards Old Wincott's wife, endeavours to silence them by quitting the house of his worthy host. It is not till afterwards that he discovers the wife to have been doubly false, and to be the paramour of Dalavill. The scenes in which he discovers her guilt, and reproaches her with it, are written with considerable force[1]. The death of the unhappy woman satisfies our sense of moral justice; and the general effect of the action is satisfactory, although the poetic touch is wanting here that is noticeable in the most important passages of *A Woman Killed with Kindness*. The bye-plot, concerned with the prodigal Lionel[2] and the devices of his aptly-named servant Rainald to delude the young scapegrace's father on his return from beyond seas, is derived from the *Mostellaria* of Plautus, which Heywood might have used either in the original or in an Italian version[3].

The Fair Maid of the West (*pr.* 1631).

The four romantic comedies which may be next noticed admit of being grouped together as comedies of adventure, and as such display a peculiar freshness—I had almost said breeziness—of treatment, as if there blew through them the salt wind from the sea. The earliest, at all events in manner, is *The Faire Maid of the West, or a Girle worth Gold*[4], printed 1631, but probably written about ten years earlier[1]. This play, in two *Parts*, although both of these were successfully performed at Court, and although its versification exhibits an advance upon that of Heywood's earlier plays, and is distinguished by an absence of rime, except at the close of long speeches or of scenes, in other respects resembles *The Four Prentices*, and was probably, like it, founded upon some popular tale. It opens with a picture, inimitable of its kind, of Plymouth on the eve of the sailing of Essex's expedition to the Azores, in the year (1597) after the capture of Cadiz. Indeed, the Earl himself, with his Captains and the Mayor of Plymouth in attendance, passes over the stage in dumb-show, and at least one other dumb-show, and at two points of the action a Chorus, help on the progress of this, even on paper, highly entertaining example of a Chronicle History not 'taken from the Chronicles.' The fortunes of the gallant master Spencer and the faithful Besse Bridges, who after blooming as the 'flower of Plymouth' in a tavern of that town becomes in the course of her wanderings the object of the adoration of King Mullisheg of 'Fesse' and of the Duke of Florence, but rejects both potentates for the sake of her true sailor love, furnish forth matter enough and to spare for the action. But I cannot tell more here of the tremendous adventures of the pair, or of the humours of Clem, Besse's 'drawer of wine,' who accompanies his mistress across the seas[2].

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[1] In his *History of Women*, bk. iv. p. 219, where Heywood relates the story of this plot at length, he affirms it to be entirely based on fact. (Cf. Halliwell-Phillipps' *Dictionary*, &c.)

[2] The prodigal, however, shows himself capable of a long rhetorical commentary on his own ingratitude (act i. sc. 2).

[3] One such, by G. Berardo, was printed in 1564 (see Klein, vol. iv. p. 251). With the scene in which the father is excluded from the house, on the pretence that it is haunted, should be compared the similar, but far superior scene in Jonson's *Alchemist* (act v. sc. 1). The device also reappears in Fielding's *The Intriguing Chambermaid* (acted 1734).—I cannot join in the admiration which has been lavished upon another scene, where the drunken rout fancies itself a crew of shipwrecked mariners. Heywood has a suggestion of the same notion in *The Captives* (act ii. sc. 2), but it was developed again at large by Cowley in the eponymous scene of his *Naufragium Joculare* (*vide infra*). It was derived from the *Deipnosophia* of Athenaeus. (See Herford, *u. s.*, p. 372, *note* 1, as to the developements of this fancy in England and in Germany.)

[4] Edited for the *Shakespeare Society's Publications* by Collier (1850), and for the *Mermaid Series* by Mr. A. W. Verity (1888).

The Captives (acted 1634).

We owe the actual recovery of the interesting play *The Captives, or The Lost Recovered*, to Mr. A. H. Bullen, who reprinted it[1] from a MS. without title or author's name in the British Museum. Inasmuch as this romantic comedy was entered as 'a new play, written by Hayward,' in Sir Henry Herbert's office-book under the date of September 3, 1634, while in the Egerton MS. it is followed by a piece transcribed in the same hand, and consisting of scenes from Heywood's *Golden* and *Silver Ages*, the external evidence is in itself convincing. But it is impossible not to agree with Mr. Bullen that the internal evidence of style and manner is likewise irresistible.

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[1] See Fleay, *u. s.*, vol. i. pp. 295–6, where Collier's date of 1617 in unhesitatingly rejected.

[2] 'Our stage,' apologetically observes the *Chorus* in act iv. sc. 1, 'so lamely can express a sea.'—It may be right to vindicate to Clem the proprietorship of an anecdote which has, I believe, been apocryphally connected with no less a name than that of Sir Isaac Newton: 'First and foremost I have observed the wisdom of these Moors, for some days since being invited to one of the chief Bashaws to dinner, after meat, sitting by a huge fire and feeling his shins to burn, I requested him to pull back his chair, but he very understandingly sent for three or four Masons and removed the chimney.'—At the close of the play, Clem resolves in future to be 'served in pomp by his fellow prentices,' instead of drawing wine himself, and to take for his motto '*Base is the man that paies.*'

The main plot of *The Captives* is borrowed from the *Rudens* of Plautus, several passages being translated almost word for word[2]. Yet notwithstanding the grossness which clings to both main-plot and bye-plot (the origin of the latter is unknown), the play as a whole, besides being skilfully constructed, is characterised not only by a generally attractive freshness of manner, but also by an *afflatus* of patriotic feeling which cannot but have stirred so much of the Elisabethan spirit as remained to respond to it. The fishermen's talk is racy of their calling, and the incidents of a shipwreck are vividly brought home to the audience. As in the nautical drama of all ages of our theatre, Englishmen come to the rescue of innocence in distress[3]; and it may perhaps be added that the popular Protestant sentiment finds expression in the tragi-comic episode of the two mutually hostile friars, which was clearly suggested by a scene in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*[4]. There are two clowns, one *eo nomine*, the other called Godfrey—both of them amusing after their kind[1].

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[1] In vol. iv of his *Collection of Old English Plays* (1885).

[2] As was noticed above, p. 565, a grotesque fancy from Athenaeus, to which allusion is made in a passage from this play, is introduced by Heywood into his *English Traveller*, of which the bye-plot is taken from another Plautine comedy.

[3] Cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 338, *note* 2. Its original source would appear to be a novel of Masuccio Salernitano, from which, rather than from the French versions of the story which preceded or followed it, Heywood seems to have borrowed the episode. See Koeppel, *Zur Quellenkunde des Stuart-Dramas*, pp. 327–8.

[4] The play contains another more pleasing reminiscence of Marlowe:

'*Scribonia.* Quick, as you love me!
Godfrey. As you love me! Right:
Who ever lov'd that lov'd not at first sight?
The poet's excellent saying.' (Act ii. sc. 2.)

Heywood and William Rowley's Fortune by Land and Sea (*pr.* 1655).

Of *Fortune by Land and Sea*[2] (not printed till 1655, after the closing of the theatres) William Rowley was joint author with Heywood, to whose earlier compositions there is reason for concluding it to belong[3]. It would, in my opinion, be futile to attempt to pronounce on their relative shares in the play, though the rough strength of Rowley may be thought discernible in certain passages in the first act[4], standing out from the level of a piece of which the style as a whole verges on the commonplace. The plot is constructed on narrative rather than on dramatic lines; and the play contains hardly a single character of intrinsic interest. It begins vigorously enough with the murder of one of the sons of Old Forrest in a gambling-house; his other son hereupon avenges his brother's death by killing the murderer in a duel, and has to fly for his life. He is sheltered by the young step-mother of his sister's husband; but this contact between the two plots, of which, as is often the case in Heywood's plays, each runs its own course, is merely fortuitous. He then manages to go to sea, where he makes a fortune after routing a band of pirates. His sister has likewise had her troubles; for her father-in-law, incensed at his son's marriage with a poor girl, disinherits him, and obliges him to become a labourer on the paternal estate. But everything ends satisfactorily, as the father-in-law dies intestate, and the brother returns home with his fortune made, and marries his preserver—'none of the poorest widdows.' All this makes up a good homespun yarn, such as Heywood understood how to spin, and the language in which it is told, except in particular passages in the first act and elsewhere[1], maintains his ordinary level. The fun is as usual provided by a clown, at whose puns we seem to hear the groundlings roaring, more especially on the occasion of the reading of the Queen's proclamation.

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[1] The former, in response to a 'Within there!' enters with a 'Within there is now without here.'—Heywood's classical learning proves itself by a *qui pro quo*:

'Syr it putt me
In minde of the greate King Agathocles,
Who was, as I have heard you oft relate,
Brain'd with a Tyle.' (Act i. sc. 3.)

—The amoebean lyric 'Oh Charity, where art thou fled' (act ii. sc. 1) is very quaint.

[2] Edited for the *Shakespeare Society's Publications* by Barron Field (1854).

[3] Barron Field conjectures that, as the proclamation published by the 'Pursevant' in act iii. sc. 5 runs in the Queen's name, the play may have been sketched by Heywood during Elisabeth's reign. In the last act, too, Young Forrest, the successful adventurer, narrates how on his return he was knighted by 'her Grace.' Mr. Fleay (*u. s.*, p. 294) notices that 'in 1609 the public were excited about pirates'; but this was hardly an exceptional state of things. Of more importance is his reference to the tract in the Bodleian Library described in *Shakespeare Society's Papers*, vol. iii. pp. 7 *seqq.* (by '*Oxoniensis*'), of which Heywood and Rowley made use, and which gives in verse the dying speeches of the pirates Clinton, Thomas Walton *alias* Purser (cf. act v. sc. 1), and a third named Arnold, whom the dramatists leave out. 'Oxoniensis' states that the type and other circumstances show this tract to have appeared some years before 1600.—The frequency of rimes in the play is also indicative of a relatively early date of composition.

[4] See particularly Old Harding's cynical speech (sc. 2):

'Go to Cheapside with virtue in your purse,
And cheapen Plate; or to the Shambles hie,
And see what meat with virtue you can buy,' &c.

A Challenge for Beauty (*pr.* 1636).

Yet another romantic comedy with an interesting plot is *A Challenge for Beautie*, printed in 1636 and probably produced only a year or two before[2]. The execution is upon the whole to be praised, although the play rather lags towards the close; and once more a vein of vigorous English self-consciousness and patriotism, and reminiscences of the battle and the breeze, animate the progress of the piece. The proud Queen Isabella of Portugal, incensed by the refusal of the noble Bonavida to extol her beauty and virtue as without a parallel, causes him to be banished, with orders that he is not to return until he can produce her match, and that if he reappears unaccompanied by such a treasure-trove, he is to suffer death. Bonavida actually finds a woman such as he seeks in the course of his travels —it need hardly be said, in England. Having exchanged rings with her in token of mutual fidelity, he makes his way back to Portugal in order to announce his success. But the Queen causes him to be thrown into prison, while she despatches an intriguing villain to obtain by means of a crafty device the ring of the English beauty, and thus to cut the ground from under Bonavida's feet. But the English girl proves more than a match for the 'proud, infinite proud' princess. She crosses the sea in the disguise of a page, and having unravelled Queen Isabella's design, obliges her to confess that Bonavida has redeemed her challenge[1]. Although as is usual with Heywood a second and less pleasing plot makes up the piece, this deserves on the whole to be ranked among the better of Heywood's dramas; and more amusement than usual is supplied by the Clown, who accompanies Bonavida on his travels, and whose survey of the qualities of ladies of different countries recalls after a fashion Portia's review of her suitors from divers lands.

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[1] The fight with the pirates in act iv begins with spirit:

'*Young Forr.* I spy the Pirates in the very prow
And forehead of their Ship, both wafting us
With their bright swords; now Steersman take thy turn;
And Boatswain with your baser trumpet's sound
Mingle your whistles shrill; oh, 'tis a Music
The Mermaids love.'

The end of the pirates too (act v. sc. 1) is effectively touched. As they pass on their way to execution, one says to the other:

'We have a flash of some half-hour long,
That let us burn out bravely.'

[2] Mr. Fleay (*u. s.*, p. 303) has traced an allusion to the (first) pillorying of Prynne (May, 1634) in a rather brutal passage in act iii ('If ere it be my luck to see thee preach through a pillory, as one of the cast limbs of your cursed crew did not long since').

A Maiden-head well Lost (*pr.* 1634).

Passing by *A Mayden-head well Lost* (printed in 1634, but probably considerably earlier in date of composition)[2], as a comedy which, though perspicuous in construction, has little or nothing to redeem the offensiveness of its plot[1], we come to those of Heywood's dramas of which the interest centres in the humorous element to be found in their depiction of contemporary life and manners. I confess myself unable to agree with those critics who regard *The Fayre Mayde of the Exchange; with the Pleasant Humours of the Cripple of Fanchurch*[2] (printed in 1607, and thrice reprinted in Heywood's lifetime) as one of the prolific author's most pleasing works. Indeed, it is mainly from respect for the opinion of Charles Lamb, whose instinct is generally so safe a guide, that I include this play in the list of Thomas Heywood's writings[3]. It was printed anonymously, and although it contains at least one passage (that cited by Charles Lamb) of considerable humour, and at least one character—that of Fiddle[4]—animated by Heywood's easy gaiety, the manner of the whole strikes me as neither natural nor pleasing[5].

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[1] Certain resemblances to the story of *Cymbeline* and of Massinger's *The Picture* (printed 1630) are pointed out in the *Introduction* to this play in *Old Plays* (Continuation of Dodsley), vol. vi. p. 323. As the late Dr. W. Wagner reminded me, Simrock, following Bartholdy, further directed attention in this connexion to the ballad 'Ο Μαυριανὸς καὶ ὁ βασιλεύς in Th. Kind's *Anthologie neugriechischer Volkslieder*.

[2] Towards the end of act ii a dumb-show is resorted to for carrying on the action; but rime is not frequent in the play. Cf. also Fleay, *u.s.*, p. 298.

The Fair Maid of the Exchange (?) (*pr.* 1607).

The action is made up of not less than three plots, of which however but one possesses any interest, while the least important of the three remains in an odd condition of incompleteness at the very close of the play.

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[1] The villain Stroza (whose appeal to 'Matchiuell' as the *genius loci* of Florence is felicitous) has a touch, but a very faint one, of Iago; the passion of the heroine Lauretta is, however, but feebly drawn. Massinger has been thought to have derived some hints from this play for his *Great Duke of Florence* (licensed 1627).

[2] Edited for the *Shakespeare Society's Publications* by Barron Field (1845).

[3] The doubts on this head of Langbaine and a writer in vol. ix of *The Retrospective Review* are strengthened by the refusal of Mr. Fleay (*u. s.*, vol. ii. pp. 229–30) to attribute it to Heywood. He is inclined to assign it to Lewis Machin.

[4] Fiddle's dignity in declining to enter into conversation when engaged in his duties to his mistress is excellent: 'Porter, I am not for you; you see I am perambulating before a female.'—But almost the best thing in the play is the little scene between Phillis and the 'Boy' (or 'Prentice), who puts the whole spirit of his period of life into a few lines:

'Were it not for modest bashfulnesse,
And that I dread a base contentious name,
I would not be a by-word to th' Exchange,
For every one to say (my self going by)
Yon goes a vassal to authority.'

[5] J. A. Symonds wrote of this domestic drama (see Introduction to *Mermaid* edition): 'To my mind its sentiment is sickly, and its story, in spite of many beautiful passages, disagreeable.'

Neither the genuineness of Master Flower's diamond, nor the loves of Mistress Mall (Moll) Berry and her two suitors, contain any element of attractiveness. The main plot, on the other hand, is very cleverly contrived; and in its management consists the chief merit of the play. It begins with the double rescue of the heroine Phillis Flower, the fair maid of the Exchange, from the hands of two ruffians, first by a Cripple, whose business is that of a 'drawer' (*i.e.* pattern-drawer) in the same building, and then, when the ruffians return, by a young gentleman of the name of Frank Golding. The imbroglio which hereupon arises is of a sufficiently amusing nature. Phillis is beloved by Frank's two elder brothers, one of whom is favoured by her father, and the other by her mother; and both in turn confide their passion to the young fellow, who scorns to be a 'bond-slave to a woman's beck.' He cannot, however, escape his fate, and soon falls desperately in love himself with the same Phillis, becomes, as he says, 'a poor enamorate,' and bids farewell to a bachelor's gaiety: 'Therefore, hat-band, avaunt! ruff, regard yourself! garters, adieu! shoe-strings—so and so!' Phillis herself, however, is in love with none of the three brothers, but with her rescuer proper, the Cripple. Here we seem on the brink of a real novelty,—an attempt to secure the sympathy of the audience for a deformed hero. But instead of returning Phillis' passion, the Cripple becomes the agent of Frank's, helps him to make fools of his brothers, and finally to secure for himself the hand of the Fair Maid, whose opportune fickleness is left wholly unaccounted for.

The plot is, with the exception of its close[1], well contrived; and the Cripple's schemes in furtherance of Frank Golding's success are comically devised. The Cripple's literary resources are considerable; for he has inherited the library of a satirical poet, which

'was just nothing
But rolls, and scrolls, and bundles of cast wit
Such as durst never visit Paul's Churchyard';

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[1] This leaves us in complete ignorance as to the result of a charge of felony on which Phillis' father is carried off to prison.

but he scorns to put his treasures to base use, to plagiarise according to the fashion of the hour, and to

'make enquiry
Where the best-witted gallants use to dine;
Follow them to the tavern; and there sit
In the next room with a calves-head and brimstone,
And overhear their talk, observe their humours:
Collect their jests, put them into a play,
And tire them too with payment, to behold
What I have filch'd from them[1].'

But neither the character of the Cripple, nor that of the Fair Maid, seems to me drawn with any real freshness or vivacity; and the good-will of the reader is gained neither for the one nor for the other. All reasoning as to the propriety of bringing a deformed hero on the stage is therefore out of place in commenting on this play; for the Cripple is merely a low-comedy character of an ordinary type[2], and there is no trace of either power or passion in Phillis' love for him, which she afterwards so suddenly abandons.

The Wise Woman of Hogsdon (*pr.* 1638).

The Wise-woman of Hogsdon, printed in 1638, but probably acted many years earlier[3], strikes me, notwithstanding its undeniable coarseness, as both in plot and execution one of the happiest of Heywood's comedies; indeed, its vivacity recalls Middleton, to whom Heywood is as a rule inferior in the lighter kind of drama. The plot turns on the devices by which 'Young-Chartley—a wild-headed gentleman' of a type usually irresistible on the stage, when presented with the lightness with which it is here drawn—seeks to escape from the inconveniences of trigamy. The personage who 'bears the name of the Drama' describes herself as a lineal successor of Mother Bombie and similar worthies[1], and combines with the practice of fortune-telling, physic, palmistry, and the curing of 'mad folks,' a variety of 'unknown' or disreputable trades or 'mysteries[2].' By her endeavours to put a whole complication wrongly right, she contrives to put everything rightly wrong; and in the end, all the characters having been with much ingenuity brought together in her domicile, everything ends in accordance with the demands of moral justice—except, perhaps, that the wise woman herself escapes the deserved doom of a ducking. This play is a comedy of manners which may be described as a picture with a purpose; and though the piece is full of coarseness, its tone is healthy, while as a stage-play it might be trusted to hold the interest of its audience from first to last[3].

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[1] Act iii. sc. 2 (part of the passage extracted by Charles Lamb).

[2] The passage in which he says that he knows his

'unworthy self
Too foul for such a beauty, and too base
To match in brightness with that sacred comet
That shines like Phoebus in London's element,'
(Act iv. sc. 2),

is not low comedy; but neither is our sympathy awakened by so ready an acquiescence in the doom of deformity.

[3] This seems a fair inference from the names of several old plays mentioned in the text, which (including *A Woman Killed with Kindness*) date from the early part of Heywood's career. (Cf. Fleay, *u. s.*, p. 291.)

Thomas Heywood and Brome's The Late Lancashire Witches (acted and pr. 1634).

The Late Lancashire Witches, in which Richard Brome co-operated with Heywood, possesses much interest for students of the social history of the seventeenth century[4]. It was certainly acted and printed in 1634; but it contains indications of being the adaptation of an earlier play—possibly an alteration by Brome of an original by Heywood[5].

The authors of *The Late Lancashire Witches* express their hope that a play dealing with such a theme as theirs may 'pass pardon'd though not prais'd.' There is some dignity in the character of the honourable country-gentleman (Generous), whose wife is discovered to be guilty of witchcraft, and his treatment of the poor creature's case is touched with a pathos that cannot but remind us of *A Woman Killed with Kindness.* Again, there is an approach to humour in the character of his servant Robin, and in that of the foolish Master Whetstone, with his constant references to his aunt and uncle[1]; and, once more in Heywood's fashion, this drama as it were unconsciously unfolds a faithful picture of contemporary English country life. Yet as a whole the play repels us, since its main purpose is to reproduce for the delectation of the theatrical public certain 'sensational disclosures' of the day, thus turning the stage into a vehicle of crude scandal,—while we cannot shut our eyes to the degrading nature of the superstitions to which, falling in frankly with the errors of their age, the authors unscrupulously pander. The belief in witchcraft, as is well known, was common to the noblest as well as to ordinary minds of this period of our national life[2], and both here and in Germany the influence of the Protestant Reformation had in the first instance tended to heighten instead of to reduce this form of superstition[3]. Numerous illustrations of its ascendancy are to be found in plays dealing with the subject, or containing references to it—such as Middleton's *The Witch*, and Ford, Dekker, and William Rowley's *The Witch of Edmonton*[4]. But *The*

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[1] Act ii. sc. 1.

[2] Act iii. sc. 1.—The sceptical view of witchcraft taken in this piece strongly contrasts with the orthodox tone of *The Late Lancashire Witches*. Clearly, the two plays belong to different epochs in the author's life.

[3] It opens with an excellent scene, showing Young Chartley as a gambler. The Latin of the 'pedantical schoolmaster' Sir Boniface occasions an infinitude of bad puns.

[4] It was translated by Tieck in his *Shakespeare's Vorschule* (Leipzig. 1823-9).

[5] See Fleay, *u. s.*, pp. 38, and 301-3, where it is asserted that 'evidently Heywood's part is founded on *The Witches of Lancaster*, by T. Potts. 1613' (see below).—A character in this comedy is referred to in Field's *A Woman is a Weathercock*, printed in 1612. Possibly, however, as Collier suggests, Lawrence was an actual personage.—As to Richard Brome, see below.—The *name* of this play was afterwards borrowed by Shadwell for one of his own (1681).

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[1] He deviates, however, into wit, when he describes an eloquent friend as a gentleman who 'speaks like a Country Parson that had took his text out of Ovid's *Metamorphosis.*'

[2] The late Mr. James Crossley, in his Introduction to Pott's *Discoverie of Witches in the County of Lancaster*, 1613 (*Chetham Society's Publications*, vol. vi. 1845), adduces instances showing witchcraft to have been accepted as a fact by Bacon, Ralegh, Selden, Sir Matthew Hale, Hobbes, Cudworth, and Henry More.

[3] Cf. my Introduction to the Clarendon Press edition of *Doctor Faustus and Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (3rd edn., pp. xxxiv *seqq.*), and see C. H. Herford, *u.s.*, p. 231 as to the persecutions under Henry Julius of Brunswick and Henry IV of France.

[4] *Macbeth*, Jonson's *The Sad Shepherd* and *The Masque of Queens*, together with many other plays, will occur to the reader as further illustrations. Of *The Witch of Islington* (acted in 1597) and *The Witch Traveller* (licensed in

Late Lancashire Witches was written with the special intention of making theatrical capital out of certain supposed actual occurrences, which had been brought under public notice by a magisterial examination in the year 1633[1]. The district called the Forest of Pendle, in Lancashire, had some years previously become notorious for the supposed practice of witchcraft within its borders; and some trials of persons charged with the offence had been held in 1612. Several years later, in 1633, another trial for witchcraft took place in the same district; and the boy whose deposition had supplied the principal evidence was brought up to London, where for the moment he absorbed public attention. He afterwards confessed that his evidence had been suborned; and in the end King Charles I, who had deigned in person to examine one of the supposed witches, pardoned all the seventeen convicted persons[2]. Of the excitement created by this business it was the object of Heywood and Brome's play to take advantage. In their view the practisers of witchcraft were participators in an actually existing form of crime, or victims of a recognised species of criminal mania; and supposing this to have been the honest belief of the dramatist, we ought not to censure very severely their endeavour to depict the serious disturbance of family life and morality resulting from so miserable a cause[3]. But in

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1623) we have nothing but the names.—Dr. Herford points out that while both Middleton and Heywood were evidently acquainted with Reginald Scot's *Discovery of Witchcraft*, they ignored his rationalism.

[1] See Crossley, *u. s.*, p. lxv, where Heywood and Brome are shown in their play to have closely followed the terms of the deposition of Edward Robinson, cited from Whitaker's *Whalley*, p. 213. This deposition is also to be found, according to Mr. Crossley in a less accurate form, in Baines' *Lancashire*, vol. i. p. 604.

[2] The *Epilogue*, while deprecating any pretension on the part of the performers of sitting 'as Justices and Judges,' hints at an expectation that the prisoners would be sentenced not to death, but to imprisonment:

> 'Perhaps great Mercy may
> After just condemnation give them day
> Of longer life.'

[3] In the play, not only is the domestic peace of Generous destroyed, but a second unhappy household is turned upside down by the witches, by whom a son and daughter are led to enforce the 'subjection of parents,' and the whole *ménage* is converted into what one of the characters humorously calls a 'Family of Love.' (Cf. *ante*, p. 516.)

the treatment which the subject receives at their hands the comic element predominates over the serious; and the process of composition was evidently too hurried to allow of more being attempted than a succession of scenes half realistic, half grotesque, but taken together all but contemptible as the substance of a dramatic action. The Lancashire dialect —which, to speak frankly, has hardly vindicated to itself an assured place in English poetical literature—is introduced into this play in a form which must be described as more or less fanciful[1].

Heywood's The Golden, The Silver, The Brazen, and the Iron Age (pr. 1611, 1613, 1613, *and* 1632 *respectively.)*

To an early period in Heywood's career seems to belong the whole of the series of dramas—as they must be called—entitled severally *The Golden*, *The Silver*, *The Brazen*, and *The Iron Age* (the last-named in two *Parts*), which have come down to us in impressions bearing the respective dates of 1611, 1613, 1613, and 1632[2]. We have the author's word for it that these plays were 'often, and not with the least applause, Publicly Acted by two Companies upon one Stage at once,' and that they 'at sundry times thronged three several Theatres with numerous and mighty Auditories.' But, unless the statement is to be supposed to refer to the two *Parts* of *The Iron Age* only—which seems quite improbable—it must be allowed to be surprising in the extreme. For it is anything but easy to conceive the nature of theatrical performances which, even if we take into account merely the number of personages who make their appearance in these plays, must have taxed to the utmost the external resources of the Red Bull, and of the other playhouses in which they were produced. That one actor should on a single occasion play several parts was the ordinary custom of the Elisabethan stage[1], which herein merely followed the example of the early modern as well as of the ancient Greek drama. But it is difficult to understand how, even with the aid of the simple appliances which doubtless indicated the several localities of the several episodes, the most active imagination could have followed so interminable a succession of assumptions. For these plays display no organic connexion between their several parts or with one another, although 'old Homer,' who appears throughout as presenter[2], serves as a formal connecting link, and dumb-shows are freely introduced to help on the action. The series is in truth nothing else than a rapid succession of dramatised classical myths—from Saturn and 'Tytan' down to the 'punishment' of all the Greek heroes 'that opposed Troy,' of whom Ulysses alone survives to speak the epilogue:

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[1] Brome, as Mr. Fleay points out, also introduces it in the *Northern Lass*.—The best account of the Lancashire dialect as a vehicle for poetry is to be found in Mr. George Milner's Introduction to vol. viii of the collected edition of the *Poems and Songs* of Edwin Waugh, one or two of which have gone some way towards securing for his native dialect an enduring literary recognition.

[2] *The Golden* and *The Silver Age* have been edited by Collier for the *Shakespeare Society's Publications*, 1851. In the introductory address *To the Reader* prefixed to *Part I* of *The Iron Age* the author states that *The Golden, Silver* and *Brazen Ages* have been 'many years in the Presse,' but that *The Iron* has never previously been published.—Possibly *The Silver* and *The Brazen Ages* may be referred to in Heywood's *Apology for Actors* (1612), where he speaks of having seen Hercules perform great feats on the stage—'Oh, these were sights to make an Alexander!'—but the reference may be to Martin Slaughter or Slater's play in two *Parts* on the subject of *Hercules* (*Part I*, 1595, see *Henslowe's Diary*, p. 51). He also wrote an *Alexander and Lodowick* (1597).

> 'And since I am the man solely reserv'd,
> Accept me for the Author's Epilogue.
> If he have been too bloody? 'Tis the Story;
> Truth claims excuse, and seeks no further glory;
> Or if you think he hath done your patience wrong
> (In tedious scenes) by keeping you so long,
> Much matter in few words, he bade me say,
> Are hard to express; that lengthen'd out this Play.'

The old stories of Greek mythology never lose their charm; and in perusing Heywood's versions of them one cannot altogether fail to sympathise with the pleasure which they must be supposed to have given both to him and to his audience[1]. The author is, however, by no means invariably correct in his mythology[2]; and while generally fresh in manner, and occasionally stirred by a breath of poetic feeling, he is on the whole content to reproduce his original as best he can, instead of, after the fashion of a Chaucer or a Lydgate, investing the legends of the ancient world with the spirit of his own age[3], or like Shakspere, converting epical or historical materials into real dramatic action. From this point of view *The Iron Age*, which deals with the story of Troy, deserves special notice[4]. Heywood is happiest in the treatment of legends containing a comic element,—such as that of Alcmena and Amphitryo in *The Silver Age* (where use is made of the Latin comedy so familiar to English dramatists[5]), and that of Venus and Mars in *The Brazen Age*, which like some other of the episodes in these plays is managed in a rather brazen fashion. In certain of the tragical episodes, however—notably in that of the death of Meleager 'the flower and pride of Calydon' in *The Brazen Age*—the writer must be allowed to have risen with his theme[6]. It would be easy to trace the authorities of which Heywood made use in this revival of so many old friends of established or of doubtful reputation. Such a commentary will suggest itself without difficulty to those readers who are not afraid of their appetites being cloyed, as the indefatigable Homer says in *The Brazen Age*, 'with viands of one taste.' But if the great body of the audience was really—as may be supposed—unfamiliar with the legends here dramatised, the fact that it derived gratification from such a series of episodes shows how easily the popular mind may be trained to enjoy itself.

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[1] So it appears from the printed copy of *The Fair Maid of the Exchange*, that 'eleven may easily act this comedy,' the twenty parts in which are distributed accordingly, the principal characters being assigned to one actor for each.—Day, in his *Humour out of Breath*, act i. sc. 2, seems to make a distinction:

> 'Your low Commedie
> Craues but few actors.'

[2] Of some of the episodes, in the earlier of the series in particular, Ovid would have been a more fitting presenter.

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[1] Several of these stories are narrated in prose in Heywood's *Nine Books, &c. concerning Women* (1624).

[2] Nor, in one remarkable passage, in his physical geography. Jupiter at Amphitryo's door very indecorously avails himself of the results of the orisons of

'Josua Duke unto the Hebrew nation
(*Who are indeed the Antipodes to us*).'

[3] Of course there are occasional touches of this sort, as when Calisto expresses her desire 'to live a Nunne and profest maid' (*The Golden Age*), and Acrisius banishes his daughter to her chamber 'there to live a Ankresse' (*Ib.*).—Heywood's scholarship is at times rather ragged; but his printer may occasionally have been at fault.

[4] Mr. Fleay supposes *Part I* of *The Iron Age* to have been identical with the play called 'troye' by Henslowe, and mentioned by him under the date of June 23, 1596.

[5] The Mercury of Plautus' and of Dryden's *Amphitryo* is here Ganymed.

[6] Dyce has pointed out a very striking resemblance between a passage in *The Brazen Age* (Vulcan's description of his fall) and *Paradise Lost*, bk. i. v. 742 (Middleton's *Works*, i. 350).

The Rape of Lucrece (5th ed. pr. 1638).

The Rape of Lucrece, of which 'the fifth impression' appeared in 1638, is in one respect a strange production. Not that anything is worthy of remark in the treatment of the story, which is quite commonplace, though rapid and dramatically sufficient as is usual with Heywood. But among all the vagaries which the literature of the stage has in our own or in any country permitted itself, I know of none more exquisitely absurd than that of introducing into a tragedy on such a subject as that of Tarquin's crime, awful in its circumstances not less than in its consequences, a novel sort of clown—a personage supposed to be on the level of the rest of the characters, but distinguished by his capacity for singing all the comic songs of the day. The 'merry Lord' Valerius with his ditties cannot but have eclipsed the sad and serious interest of this tragedy, although in addition to its tragic story the legends of Horatius Cocles, Mucius Scaevola and the battle of Lake Regillus are all brought upon the stage. Most of Valerius' songs are doggrel, and one or two are something worse, but they include at least one charming exception—the very pretty lyric beginning 'Pack clouds away, and welcome day.' No doubt some curious antiquarian information is to be gained from these efforts, in part engrafted upon the first design, to flatter the local knowledge of idle people about town[1]; and this incongruous acknowledgement

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[1] See the song on London taverns in act ii, beginning:

'The Gentry to the King's Head,
The Nobles to the Crown,
The Knights unto the Golden Fleece,
And to the Plough the Clown.'—

'The cries of Rome'—one of the songs which 'were added by the stranger that lately acted Valerius his part'—may, as a compendium of London street-cries, be compared with the list in Lydgate's *London Lickpenny*. (The is the only tribute which Heywood's dramatic version of an immortal story can be said to merit.

Love's Mistress (*pr.* 1636).

Love's Maistresse, or The Queen's Masque (printed 1636, and again in 1640) may be noticed here, as in fact an allegorical drama rather than an entertainment composed with reference to any particular occasion. It was performed both at Court, where, at first under the title of *The Queen's Masque* and then under that of *Cupid's Mistress* or *Cupid and Psyche*, it was presented thrice within eight days, and on the public stage. Inigo Jones appears to have been specially prolific of 'excellent inventions' for the production of this masque; but the notion that scenery was used in it seems hardly deducible from Cupid's 'descending in a cloud' for one of the Prologues, and in the Epilogue 'pointing to the several Planets.' Although moving more or less on the lines of the masque [1], *Love's Mistress* has an independent story of its own—no other than that of Cupid and Psyche, based on Apuleius [2]. Indeed, Apuleius himself, coming forward as presenter,

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student of the various cries, the popular ballads, and the general humours of London street life, should notice an odd dramatic production of this period called *The London Chanticleers*, which, as Halliwell-Phillipps thought, was possibly performed outside London—possibly when the capital was 'ravaged by pestilence in 1636.' Mr. Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. ii. p. 340, comes to the same conclusion as to the date of this one-act play, which can only by courtesy be allowed the name of a 'comedy.' It is printed in vol. xii of Hazlitt's *Dodsley*.)—The license allowed in the use made of a character of this description is exemplified by the reckless anachronism (act iii. sc. 3): 'Fill for Ualerius. Thou shouldst drink well, for thou hast been in the German wars; if thou lovest me, drink *upse freeze*.' (Nares derives this phrase, which signifies being half drunk, from '*op-zyn-fries*' = *à la mode de Frise* = in the Dutch fashion.)

[1] Perhaps the procession of (human) Asses whom Apuleius introduces to the notice of Midas may be looked upon as supplying the place of the anti-masque. The 'Ignorant Ass' is delineated with Spenserian intensity of conviction:

'That, Midas, is thy brother,
A piece of moving earth, illiterate, dull;
Who having in himself nought commendable
Envies what 's good in others, and yet dare
In his own impudence with Arts compare:
A block, a stone, yet learning he'll revile,
And a dull ignorant Ass we will him style.'

[2] The story of Psyche was afterwards dramatised by Molière, from whom Shadwell borrowed the argument of his *Psyche* (1674).

explains to his collocator Midas in Jonsonian fashion the meaning of the allegory as it proceeds[1]. The pastoral names are borrowed from Spenser, and Lyly's *Midas* was doubtless also present to the mind of the writer[2]. This play is written with a more profuse expenditure of poetical ornament than is common with Heywood; but the serious passages can scarcely be said to show real power, while the comic are for the most part trivial. Of its kind, however, this composition is a not unfavourable specimen, and in the rapidity of the action shows an advance on Lyly's mythological plays.

Non-extant plays by Heywood.

In view of the great fertility of Heywood as a playwright, and of his carelessness as to the literary reputation brought to him by his plays, it seems superfluous to dwell upon the titles of a few further plays entered as his in the Stationers' Registers, or attributed to him by tradition. Among the latter may, however, be mentioned *The Bold Beachams* (Beauchamps), which in the *Induction* to *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* the Citizen's Wife longingly couples with one of Heywood's established City favourites[3];—among the former *The Apprentice's Prize*, and *The Life and Death of Sir Martin Skynk, with the Warres of the Low Countries*, entered in 1634 as by Heywood and Brome. I cannot perceive sufficient reason for accepting Mr. Bullen's (not very confident) conjecture that *Dicke of Devonshire*, a play rescued by him from the obscurity of MS. and containing fervent appeals to English patriotism, may be ascribed to Heywood[4]. His revision of Marlowe's *Jew of Malta* (1633) has been already noticed[1].

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[1] Not, however, I think, the personal significance perceived by Mr. Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. ii. p. 299.—The chief force of the satire is directed against the low-minded type of critic, of whom Apuleius says, again with Spenserian ardour:

> 'Oh grief, that silver hairs should crown his head
> By whom the Muses are dishonourèd!'

[2] Cf. Fleay, *u. s.*—The familiar device of *Echo* is used unsparingly.

[3] 'I was ne'er at one of these plays, as they say, before; but I should have seen Jane Shore once; and my husband hath promised me any time this twelvemonth, to carry me to the Bold Beauchamps, but in truth he did not.'

[4] See the Introduction to the reprint of this play in vol. ii of Mr. Bullen's *Collection of Old English Plays* 1883), and cf. the paper on the play read by Mr. D. P. Alford, late Rector of Tavistock, to the Devonshire Association for

His pageants; Besides his plays, we possess a series of pageants from Heywood's hand, consecrated, as nearly all their sonorous titles indicate, to the honour and glory of the City of London, her great Companies, and her Chief Magistrates. Among these are *London's Jus Honorarium* (1631); *Londini Artium et Scientiarum Scaturigo* (1632); *Londini Emporia* (1633); *Londini Sinus Salutis* (1637); *Porta Pietatis* (1638), which is specially notable for its devout tone, and *Londini Status Pacatus* (1639), which contrasts the peaceful prosperity of the English capital with the troubles of war that (as a marginal note reminds the reader) had raged 'lately in Germany.' *dialogues;* The '*Pleasant Dialogues and Drammas, selected out of Lucian, Erasmus, Textor, Ovid,' &c.*[2], only call for notice here in so far as certain among them, such as the pastoral drama *Amphrisa* and the dramatisation of Ovid's tale of *Jupiter and Io*, actually correspond to the designation of 'stage-poetry' applied to some of these pieces by the author; it is not impossible that some of

the Advancement of Science, Literature and Art (*Transactions*, vol. xxiv, 1892). The hero of the play, Richard Pike or Peek ('Manly Peek') of Tavistock, was left behind by the expedition of 1625 at Cadiz, where he covered himself with glory by his personal prowess, manifested more especially in his beating off with his quarter-staff three fully-armed Spaniards. On his return he published a tract descriptive of his exploits under the taking title of *Three to One*, which is reprinted in vol. i of Professor Arber's *English Garner* (1877).—In so much of the play as refers to the exploits of Dick of Devonshire, and in the introductory scene between the two Devonshire merchants resident at 'Sherryes,' whose talk furnishes an excellent exposition of the long-lived Anglo-Spanish quarrel, Heywood's fresh and straightforward style might perhaps be thought discernible, though even here I remain unconvinced; but I am quite unable to agree with Mr. Bullen that the 'bye-plot' (which is really the main plot) of the wrongs of Donna Eleonora and the double-dyed villainy of Don Henrico 'bears even clearer traces of his manner.' An easy way out of the difficulty would be to suppose the co-operation of William Rowley, who might perhaps have painted the realistic picture of Henrico's lust; but such conjectures seem to me unwarrantable. Mr. Fleay (vol. ii. p. 236) thinks that the author of the play was Shirley, and that he produced it under the title of *The Brothers* (see below).

[1] See vol. i. p. 338, *note* 2; and cf. *ante*, p. 568.

[2] They were published in 1637 with a variety of Prologues, Epilogues, Elegies, Epitaphs, Epithalamiums, Epigrams and sundry other Fancies. Cf. *ante*, p. 553, *note* 1.

them were actually intended for performance[1]. One of the *Dialogues*, a versified translation of Lucian's *Timon* under the title of *Misanthropos, or The Man-hater*, has been mentioned above[2]. Heywood's indefatigable pen also produced a number of prologues and epilogues to plays and other entertainments of various kinds—including a series designed for the Court, and Prologues to the adapted *Jew of Malta* and to *Richard III*—the latter for the encouragement of 'a young witty Lad' who played the part of the hero at the Red Bull[3]. In short, the activity of this writer must have been all but inexhaustible, even on the evidence of what is left to us of his works; and although his labours for the most part belonged to a period of English theatrical history in which no one writer could any longer have been either envied or maligned as a *factotum* of the stage, he possessed in an exceptional measure the combination of gifts requisite for such an office.

prologues and epilogues.

It would grieve me to seem unjust towards a writer to whom I have long felt very specially attracted—and this by no means only because of a pious although perhaps more or less apocryphal bond. Yet the highest praise which it seems right to bestow upon Thomas Heywood is that which was happily expressed by Tieck when he described him as 'the model of a light and rapid talent[4].' Carried, it may be, by fortune or by choice from the tranquil court of Peterhouse to a very different scene of intellectual effort, he worked during a long and laborious life with an energy in itself deserving of respect, and manifestly also with a facility attesting no ordinary natural endowment. His creative power was, however, of that secondary order which is content with accommodating itself to conditions

Summary of his powers as a dramatist.

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[1] Mr. Fleay suggests, *u. s.*, p. 285, that four of these short dramas, including the two mentioned in the text, were included in the *Five Plays in One*, noted by Henslowe (*Diary*, p. 86) as first performed in 1597. (Concerning this kind of production, see below, on Beaumont and Fletcher's *Four Plays in One*.)

[2] *Ante*, p. 180.

[3] Cf. Fleay, *u. s.*, pp. 303–5, where it is pointed out that all these pieces were written by Heywood between the years 1630 and 1636.

[4] *Shakespeare's Vorschule*, vol. i, *Vorrede*, p. xl.

imposed by the prevailing tastes of the day. It may be merely his 'prentice hand that he tried on a dramatic reproduction of chronicles and popular story-books; but though even here the simplicity of his workmanship was due to a natural directness of touch by no means to be confounded with rudeness of hand, he cannot be said to have done much to revive a species which though still locally popular was already doomed to decay. When at a later date he endeavoured to treat dramatically the oft-told tales of classical history and legend, he proved deficient in the poetical *afflatus* which had entitled earlier dramatists to vindicate to themselves the use of such materials. On the other hand, he had caught the contagion of that spirit of adventure by land, and more especially by sea, which was like the inspiration of a tenth Muse to so many of our Elisabethans; and he contrived—though in truth there was little of contrivance in the process—to interfuse it with the homely pathos which was perhaps his most distinctive literary gift. Happily for his fame, a taste had formed, or was forming, itself for the treatment on the stage of incidents of private life—events of which the interest came home to domestic experience, crimes which disturbed the peace of families rather than of nations, sorrows such as their common humanity enables gentle and simple alike to understand. In the works in which he dealt with subjects of this description his tact and skill as a playwright were enhanced by the pathetic power with which he was signally endowed. Thus—whether by 'accident' or not, it is idle to enquire—he produced among a mass of plays such masterpieces as *A Woman Killed with Kindness* and *The English Traveller*. Of humour he had his share—or he would have been no master of pathos; but he cannot be said to have excelled in humorous characterisation; there is as a rule little individuality in his comic figures at large, and his clowns, although good examples of their kind, are made to order. Indeed, the inferior sort of wit—which of all writers dramatists most readily acquire as a literary accomplishment—his practised inventiveness displays with the utmost abundance; of all the Elisabethan playwrights he is one of

His pathos in the domestic drama.

the most unwearied, and to my mind one of the most intolerable punsters. In outward form he is nearly as Protean as in choice of subject and of treatment; his earlier plays more especially abound with rimes; in general, fluent verse and easy prose are freely intermixed. But—apart from the pathetic force of particular passages and scenes, and a straightforward naturalness which lends an irresistible charm to a writer as it does to a friend in real life—his strength lies in a dramatic insight which goes far towards the making of a master of the playwright's art, while it has undoubtedly been possessed by some not entitled to rank as dramatic poets.

His masterly skill in the invention of dramatic situations.

He thoroughly understood what is meant by an effective—an irresistible—dramatic situation; and upon the invention and preparation of such he concentrated his powers with the sureness of a modern French dramatist intent upon his *scène à faire*. The climax of *A Royal King and a Loyal Subject*, the discovery and sentence in *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, and the final concatenation and *dénouement* of *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon* would make the fortune of a play in any period of the stage. Heywood, with all his *naïveté*, is an author the study of whom cannot be too strongly recommended to writers for the theatre.

In what sense he may be called 'a prose Shakspere.'

While, then, the sterling merits of Thomas Heywood are such as to leave stingless the contemptuous taunts of the Restoration satirists[1], Charles Lamb's famous description of him as 'a prose Shakspere' must not tempt us to over-estimate the sum of his powers as a dramatist. With a later interpreter of this kindly and witty saying[2], we may hold it warranted in two respects. The moral purity of Heywood, as compared with other dramatists of his age, recalls that of his greatest contemporary, serenely resting like his on trust in the Divinity which is wiser than ourselves. And the 'natural repose'—or the measure of it—which we recognise amidst all the stir and bustle of Heywood's plays, is refreshing to any one who turns to them from the uncomfortable heat or the artificial spasms of so many of his contemporaries; and it is in harmony with the innate modesty of the man who claimed no inspiration for his Muse but the human life by which she was surrounded. His 'dull and earthy Muse' he humbly calls her in the Prologue to his most famous play; and he well knew that to him was denied that gift of irradiating human things by the celestial light of genius which belongs only to a great poet. Yet even as a prose Shakspere—a writer who shared or approached some of the qualities of the master without being able to aspire to that supreme gift—Heywood lacked the most indispensable of these very qualities. This was the power of characterisation, without which all resemblances to the genius of Shakspere as a dramatist must remain merely superficial. Of truth and depth of feeling Heywood gives many proofs; but it lies beyond his power to create living individualities, representatives in nature's own never-ending variety of the everlasting types of human character. Even in his best plays it is the situations rather than the characters developed by them which engage our attention. A Shakspere —even a prose Shakspere—would have formed the erring wife and the loyal vassal into figures which we should have remembered for their own sake, human beings of whom we might have said, 'Thus, and not otherwise, they must have acted.' Of such an achievement Heywood falls something short; and Charles Lamb's famous description of him must after all be dismissed as essentially misleading—which indeed such epigrammatic labellings not unfrequently are[1].

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[1] Dryden in his *Mac Flecknoe* laughs at Heywood, Shirley, and Ogilby promiscuously as 'neglected authors,' 'martyrs of pies,' &c.; and Oldham follows suit, if he had not led the way, with a similar jumble of names:

> Quarles, Chapman, Heywood, hither had applause,
> And Wild and Ogilby in former days.
> (*A Satire Dissuading from Poetry.*)

[2] See an article in the *Edinburgh Review* for April, 1841, entitled *Beaumont and Fletcher and their Contemporaries*, cited in the *Introductory Memoir* in Pearson's reprint, p. xxx.

Rapidity without carelessness of composition; effectiveness in construction, except for his usual habit of leaving main-plot and bye-plot to come together as best they may, if indeed they are to be united at all; tenderness of feeling and vivacity of touch; together with an entire absence of affectation, and consequently a refreshing freedom from sham pathos and false sentiment: these seem to me Thomas Heywood's most distinguishing characteristics as a dramatist.

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[1] For instance, the description of Crabbe as 'Pope in worsted stockings.' Crabbe is not deficient in polish, but he now and then wants point, and never leaves a sting behind him.

Internal evidence of his modesty and moral worth.

As a man, it is not too much to say that there is evidence enough for concluding that he must have resembled Shakspere in that quality which is the most loveable, although not the most constant, accompaniment of merit and success. He worked zealously in the profession, for which in argument he broke so vigorous a lance, and in the conjunct branch of authorship, but 'with great modesty, and small noise[1]'; he was in truth, so far as external as well as internal evidence goes, one of the most modest of our dramatists—perhaps of our poets—in his estimate of himself. Faithful in his own person to the service of the stage during a period of great length, including both the height of its national importance and the beginning of its visible decline and degradation, he might with a good conscience indite his apology for his brethren and himself; since we may confidently assume that there was little in his life, as there is certainly nothing in his works, so far as they have come down to us, for which he needed to blush.

John Day 1574-1640 or ante).

Of JOHN DAY'S[2] dramatic writings as little would have been known to the present generation as remains on record concerning his personal life, but for the judicious enterprise of a scholar to whom the study of our dramatic literature is under many obligations. Until Mr. Bullen reprinted five plays by Day, together with his *Peregrinatio Scholastica* and *Parliament of Bees*, only a single play by him (*The Blind Beggar of Bednal Green*) had been generally accessible. Yet even if the conjecture be left aside which attributes to Day's authorship the most interesting example of a quite distinct species of our drama[1], the outline at least of his personality seems recognisable through his free and facile productions, nor is a modest niche to be denied him among the contemporaries with whose labours his own went so largely in hand.

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[1] Address *To the Reader* prefixed to *The Fair Maid of the West*.

[2] *The Works of John Day*, now first collected, with an *Introduction* and *Notes* by A. H. Bullen, 1887; see also the same writer's notice of Day in vol. xiv of *The Dictionary of National Biography*, 1888. Cf. Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. i. pp. 105-15. Quite recently, in *The Nineteenth Century* for October, 1897, Mr. Swinburne has published an essay on Day.

His life and literary labours.

John Day, the son of a Norfolk husbandman, was born at Cawston in 1574, and educated at Ely. In 1592 he was admitted as a sizar at Caius College, Cambridge; but already in the following year he was expelled from his college for stealing a book[2]. It is unknown whether he at once betook himself to London life. He certainly had no desire in later life to ignore his early Cambridge connexion; for on the title-pages both of his *Peregrinatio Scholastica* and of his *Parliament of Bees* he is designated as some-time student of Caius. Both these works contain unmistakeable indications of his sympathy with college life[3], and in the former he shows local knowledge of the Cambridge of University men[4]. The first actual notice of him as in London occurs in Henslowe's *Diary*, under the date of August. 1598, when he is mentioned as the writer of a play called *The Conquest of Brute, with the Finding of the Bath,* in which, as it appears from a subsequent entry, Chettle also had a hand[1]. If any credit could be attached to an entry in the Stationers' Registers dated April 8th, 1654, he joined, or was on the point of joining Marlowe, whose death took place in 1593, in the writing of a play; but there is no possibility of verifying this statement[2].

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[1] It will be more appropriate, as well as more convenient, to deal with the arguments that have been advanced in support of the theory of Day's authorship of the *Parnassus Plays*, when treating a little further on of the academical drama of this period.

[2] See the notice of the admission of John Dey [*sic*] in Dr. Venn's *Biographical History of Gonville and Caius College*, vol. i (1897), p. 146. There can be no reasonable doubt as to the identity: the Caius records, Dr. Venn informs me, know of no other John Day or Dey. The expulsion is noted in the College *Gesta*.

[3] See in *The Parliament of Bees, Character ii*, the fine speech in which Eleemosynus, the Hospitable Bee, describes his munificent endeavours on behalf of those 'bees wanting tails'—decayed scholars—who

'in daies of yore
Pend learnèd Canzons, for no other meed
But that in them unletterd Bees might reade
And, reading, lay up knowledge.'

[4] In *Tractate XX*, Time, having been lost by Learning (the hero of the allegory), is found wasting himself upon all manner of devices for making away with him both in and out of doors. Having been made sick by 'whiffing Tobacco and drinking healths,' he is enticed out to take the air; 'and being hott some went to swim at freshmans heate, some at paradise and some in Barnewell poole; some to Chery hinton, other to Hogmagog hills, but a great sort to Batts ffolie; when Time finding himself soe much neglected, &c.'

Between the years 1598 and 1603, as we know from a long series of entries in Henslowe's *Diary*, Day was busily engaged as a playwright, but only one of the twenty-two plays in the writing of which he is stated to have been concerned during this period, the *Blind Beggar* aforesaid, is known to have been printed. His most frequent collaborator seems to have been William Haughton, with whom he at least twice essayed the species of domestic tragedy[3] so popular at the time; but he was also repeatedly associated with Chettle, as well as occasionally with Dekker[4], Richard

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[1] *Diary*, pp. 131 and 133.

[2] The play in question, called *The Maiden's Holiday*, was one of those destroyed by Warburton's cook.

[3] In the *Tragedie of Cox of Collumpton* and *The Tragedie of Merie* (both 1599) Merie, or Merry, was the murderer of Beech, a chandler in Thames Street, London; and his crime is the theme of one of the plots which make up *Two Tragedies in One*, printed 1601. On the title-page of *Two Tragedies* this production is ascribed to Robert Yarrington: and Collier, vol. ii. p. 437, assumes both portions of the double-play to have been written by an author of that name. Nothing, however, is known as to any such writer; and Mr. Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. ii. p. 285, gives good reasons for the conclusion that the Beech-Merry portion was Day and Haughton's play, and identical with *Beech's Tragedy*, licensed (for printing?) in 1600, while he further supposes that the remaining portion of the *Two Tragedies*, which treated the story of the Babes in the Wood, was the same as Chettle's *Tragedy of Orphans* (begun 1599) and perhaps as Day's *Italian Tragedy* (in progress in the same year). Thus *Two Tragedies in One* would have been the joint composition of Day, Haughton, and Chettle; and Yarrington would have been nothing but a fictitious name.—A third play, probably of the same type, mentioned by Henslowe as Day's, was called *The Bristol Tragedy* (1602), which Collier erroneously identified with the comedy of *The Fair Maid of Bristol*, acted at Court in 1605, and extant.

[4] *The Spanish Moor's Tragedy* (1600) by Day, Dekker, and Haughton, was thought by Collier to be probably the same play as that printed in 1657 as Marlowe's under the title of *Lust's Dominion.* See, however, *ante*, p. 467 and note; I may here add that Mr. Bullen perceives no trace of Day's hand

Hathway, and Wentworth Smith. After 1603 we are left without further evidence of Day's productivity till 1610, when he appears as the author of *The Mad Pranks of Merry Moll*—which may or may not have been a play[1]. In 1619 and in 1623 he was certainly associated with Dekker as a playwright[2], but after the latter date no play from his hand is mentioned as having been produced. In the *Peregrinatio Scholastica*, written in his later years[3], he hints at a 'fog of necessity' which prevents him from sustained and continuous literary work; but he found time for one or two smaller poetical efforts,—among them a (non-extant) poem on the miracles of our Lord, and for two larger productions—one in prose and the other in verse—which may alike be described as unconnected with the stage. The *Peregrinatio Scholastica, or Learninges Pilgrimage*, not known to have been printed till our own times[4], has a certain biographical interest, and the scheme of the allegory will not be overlooked in connexion both with the general developement of this literary fancy, and with the ascription to Day of *The Pilgrimage to Parnassus* and the *Two Parts* of *The Return.* Learning, then, engages in a 'serious pilgrimage' to the shrine of Latria (Divine Service, perhaps conceived of in more than one sense[5]), on which he is attended by Cronos, 'a serving-man as ancient as Time,' and Alethe, 'a page'—Day delights in pages—'as trusty as Truth himself.' Their journey leads them among the Cosmophili, where they gain experience of the

Peregrinatio Scholastica.

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in *Lust's Dominion*, but recognises in its 'tragic lucidness' some resemblance to Chettle's *Hoffman's Tragedy*. It is curious, by the way, that Oberon and his fairies, who play a part in the *Parliament of Bees*, should be introduced into *Lust's Dominion*.

[1] Mr. Fleay asserts that it was *not*. Middleton and Dekker's *The Roaring Girl*, of which Mary Frith (*alias* Moll Cutpurse) was the heroine, was printed in 1611. Cf. *ante*, p. 519.

[2] In the former year in the authorship of *The Life and Death of Guy Earl of Warwick*; probably not the extant play, *Guy Earl of Warwick*, printed 1661, and professing to be by 'B. J.'

[3] In the Dedication he describes himself as a 'neighbour of long standing.'

[4] Mr. Bullen's edition of this tract is printed from a MS. in the British Museum.

[5] Not merely, I suppose, in that which Mr. Fleay has in view when he enquires concerning Day: 'Did he "marry Latria," i. e. take Orders?'

'complete tradesman,' who makes the best of this world, and to the enchanted castle of Poneria, where they are entertained by her seven sons, our old friends the Seven Deadly Sins. Learning is hereupon cast upon the island of Necessity, and visits the Court of Superbia and the city of Avarice; makes the personal acquaintance of a 'suburbe justice' and a simoniacal country vicar, and having finally, notwithstanding the support of Industry, visited both Beggar's Bush and Weeping Cross, in the end with the aid of aged Experience finds his way to his goal[1].

The Parliament of Bees.

Better known to fame is Day's verse allegory or fable —for like Dryden's *Hind and Panther* it partakes in some measure of the character of both species—entitled *The Parliament of Bees*, and printed in 1641[2]. Charles Lamb, who has printed two separate extracts from what he calls 'this curious old Drama,' praises the happy manner of its execution; 'the words,' he says, are those 'which bees would talk with, could they talk; the very air seems replete with humming and buzzing melodies, while we read them.' Undoubtedly Day here as elsewhere gives proof of a singular lightness and pleasantness of touch; the methods of poetical allegory of the satirical sort had grown easier since John Heywood had elaborated *The Spider and the Flie*, who, as Oliver Goldsmith might have said, had talked more like elephants. But it is difficult to suppose that Day's agreeable composition was actually designed for performance; and probably when it was composed, shortly before its author's death, he had for some time ceased to write for the stage. Strangely enough there are comprised in it large borrowings from Dekker's play of *The Wonder of a Kingdom* (licensed 1623) as well as from Samuel Rowley's *The Noble Soldier* (printed 1636)[3], and we are reduced to the possible explanation that Day had formerly contributed to these two plays, and now reclaimed his contributions when putting together a work designed as a kind of memorial of his powers. If so, he was guilty of a literary appropriation excusable even under a stricter code than that of Elisabethan practice [1]. The scheme is founded on the notion of a parliament of bees held under the presidency of the Master Bee, 'pro-rex' or deputy of King 'Obron,' where bills of pains and penalties are presented against offenders such as the Humble Bee, the Wasp, the Hornet and the Drone, and where a succession of bees of divers qualities and characters buzz in to give an account of themselves in dialogue. The Plush Bee typifies the insolent scorner of everything except luxury and extravagance; the Poetical Bee demonstrates the miserable contrast between the practices of Grub Street and the precept of Persius bidding poets 'pilfer clouds from off Parnassus top'; the Passionate (or Lover), the Usuring and the Quacksalving Bees severally expound and expose themselves; and in the end 'Obron' in person holds his royal progress, dispenses justice, and, having ordered all things for the best, follows the 'field-music' that summons him back to fairy-land [2]. The entire poem is not only full of life and animation, but it contains passages of deep feeling, and in form, unless portions of the work are assignable to Dekker, furnishes conclusive proof of the flexibility of Day's gift of versification.

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[1] The style of this allegory is on the whole sedate, but it contains occasional touches of Euphuism. See *Tractate VII*: 'for as in rotten wood little wormes glister and shine in the night which are not perceived in the day, soe tho the proud man glisters like gold, shines like a diamond in this dark and gloomy night, the world, yet *in die quando sol Justiciae apparebit in proprio colore videbitur.*

[2] There is no sufficient evidence of an earlier edition.

[3] Cf. *ante*, pp. 466 and 548.

We have scarcely any further knowledge as to the life and non-dramatic labours of John Day. It would be unsafe to argue from a passage in the *Parliament of Bees*, which shows sympathy with persons imprisoned for their faith [3], that he was himself a Roman Catholic in profession or at heart. If such was the case, we need not suppose the fact to have weighed with Ben Jonson, who doubtless hated Day as an associate of Dekker[1]. We hear nothing further of his relations with his fellow-playwrights except what is implied by his association with several of them in authorship; but in 1640 his death was lamented in an elegy by the city-poet John Tabham, of which the chief point is a pun upon his name. If, as seems to have been the case, Day was careless of fame, this tone of mind harmonises with his shrinking from dependence upon private patronage[2].

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[1] See Mr. Bullen's *Introduction*, p. 26. Mr. Fleay goes further, and speaks of the masque as founded on two plays, with the addition of the framework and a further enlargement. Mr. Swinburne considers *Character iii* to be the work of Dekker, and his hand to be also recognisable in *Characters vii*, *ix*, and *x*.

[2] The concluding two 'characters' or scenes in which Oberon appears are written in light and not ungraceful octosyllabic verse.

[3] See *Character ii*, where Eleemosynus says that on Fridays he will pray for

'such as for their Conscience sake
Are kept in bonds.'

These were certainly not followers of Manasses. (See below as to *The Isle of Gulls.*)

His plays; The Isle of Gulls (pr. 1606).

The Ile of Guls, printed in 1606, and probably produced in the previous year[3], is not included in the earlier series of plays in which Day was concerned for Henslowe's company, but according to date of impression stands first among its author's extant plays, and furnishes perhaps the most characteristic example of the variety of romantic comedy which would appear to have best suited his literary talent. The plot, in its origin more or less due to Sidney's *Arcadia*, is, as in other of Day's dramatic productions, carelessly built up on the basis of a romantic fancy, without much regard either for poetic consistency or for dramatic verisimilitude; but room is found in the action both for much frolic mirth, frequently animated by a spirit of irresistible gaiety, and also unmistakeably for a large amount of personal satire at the significance of which we can only guess[1]. The Arcadian Duke has withdrawn in voluntary exile to the Isle of Gulls, in order to marry his daughters to none but the most exceptional of suitors. Hippolita and Violetta, though naughty girls in their talk, which I cannot think quite so fascinating as it seems to be to Day's editor, are an amusing pair of gad-abouts, who inevitably fall into the arms of Demetrius and Lysander, disguised respectively as a woodman and as an Amazon. The counter-design of the wicked courtier Dametas and his servant Manasses, together with the fatuous passion of both the Duke and his Duchess for the androgynous Lysander, contribute to the imbroglio, which culminates in a diverting scene of 'errors' among the gulls flocking to Adonis' chapel. The writing of this play is for the most part admirable, not only in isolated passages of great poetic merit, but also in entire scenes of animated fancy and sprightly humour[2]. In one of these the humour takes the novel form of a satirical sermon, which reproduces with extraordinary fidelity the canting tone of a perennial type of popular preachers[3].

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[1] He designated Day and Dekker, together with one or two others, as 'all rogues,' and Day and Middleton as 'base fellows.' (*Conversations with Drummond*, pp. 4 and 12.)

[2] See the Dedication of *Humour out of Breath*, where he asserts that he would rather bestow his pains on 'Signior Nobody' 'for a brace of Angells certaine, than stand to the bountie of a Better-man's Purse-bearer, or a very good woman's Gentleman-usher: my reason is, I cannot attend.' In other words, he preferred 'the capricious public' to dancing attendance upon such patrons as these.

[3] See Fleay, *u. s.*, pp. 108 *seqq.*, where will be found some highly ingenious suggestions as to allusions contained in the play, which go far towards establishing its date. Mr. Bullen has noted allusions to *The Isle of Gulls* both in Dekker's *The Whore of Babylon* (1607) and in the same author's popular prose-tract *The Gull's Horn-Book* (1609).—The assertion in the *Induction*, that the title of the play was not adopted 'out of any dogged disposition,' indicates that it was suggested by the title of Nashe's *Isle of Dogs* (cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 425).

Humour out of Breath (printed 1608).

A second comedy in a similar vein is *Humour out of Breath*, printed in 1608[4]. The title was evidently suggested by the success of Jonson's two comedies, and a passage in the play that looks like a satirical allusion to these, may possibly have heightened Jonson's antipathy to Day[1]. Here again we have a sort of Arcadian fancy, from whose wings the down has been brushed by a careless hand,—a production which borders upon extravaganza, but which furnishes opportunity for plenty of the broad fun that is so generally welcome to 'the drama's patrons[2].' Octavio Duke of Venice having completely vanquished his rival Anthonio Duke of Mantua, exultingly sends forth his two sons to find consorts worthy of them, while a similar venture is made on her own account, in the company of nobody but an indiscreet page, by his daughter Florimell, a young woman with a mind and a tongue of her own ('an elder woman might have spoken lesse'). As a matter of course, the two princes, whose father has followed them in disguise, fall in love with the exiled Duke of Mantua's two daughters. when beheld fishing with 'angels' in a brook; and Florimell loses her heart to their brother Aspero, Anthonio's irreconcileable son, whose personality is at the outset elegiac, or, in Mr. Swinburne's phrase, 'almost tragic.' In the further course of the action such pastoral hues as tinged its earlier scenes fade out of it; but there is no falling-off in the vivacity of the wit-combats. In the end Anthonio, who has been recalled by the Mantuans, is besieged by Octavio, furious at his sons' choice. Aspero, who has previously secured possession of Florimell[3], and his sisters, are with their father; and the lovers and ladies having met in bright colloquy at the assault upon the walls, a happy ending is duly brought about. The pleasant impression left by this play, slender as it is in texture, is due to its light-hearted gaiety, which has a certain charm, notwithstanding divers lapses into what would be very mildly described as indecorum [1].

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[1] Mr. Fleay has shown that there is some reason for supposing the play to have been one of those in which the King (as the Duke Basilius seems to have been originally called) was brought upon the stage. His interpretation of the supposed literary satire contained in the play is more doubtful; Dametas, whose figure (see especially his elaborate execration upon all poetasters, act iv. sc. 4) certainly seems to conceal some personal intention, was, he thinks, meant for Samuel Daniel.

[2] Day is a writer who, as General Paoli said of Goldsmith, like the sea 'jette des perles et beaucoup d'autres belles choses sans s'en apercevoir.' See, for instance, the passage in act ii. sc. 3, where the enamoured Duchess is on the track of the Amazon whom she suspects to be a man, commencing:

'This way he went; on this sweet violet bed
Still dwells the print of his enamour'd tread.'

In the way of cleverness, mention should be made of the ingenious scene of a game at bowls played between the Amazon and her adorers, act ii. sc. 5, a sort of comic counterpart to the card-playing scene in Thomas Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, act iii. sc. 2.

[3] See the 'sheepish admonition' of Manasses, act iii. sc. 1, a singularly close anticipation, as I see Mr. Swinburne likewise notes, of the oratorical style of Mr. Chadband.

[4] It was reprinted, with a few Notes, for the *Percy Library* by the late Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps, 1860.

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[1] See Octavio's observations in act ii. sc. 1: 'I have a strange habit, and I must cut out an humor sutable to it, and humors are pickt so neere the bone, a man can scarce get humour ynough to give a flea his breakfast,' &c.

[2] I have already referred to the dedication of this play to 'Signior No-body.' In the *Isle of Gulls*, act ii. sc. 5, the pert Violetta makes use of the catch-phrase 'Signior Noe.'—As to a possible connexion of the popular figure of 'Signior No-body' with the comedy of *No-body and Some-body*, see below.

[3] Or rather, she and her page have helped him, with the aid of a game of blindman's buff (which here serves the purpose for which in plays of this period a masque is frequently introduced), to escape from and befool his adversary. In a previous scene, of more humour than pathos, Florimell feigns death in order to surprise Aspero's affection.

Law-tricks (printed 1608).

A less attractive sample (as it seems to me) of the same class of comedy is *Law-Tricks, or Who would have thought it?* also printed in 1608. Although the Dedication of this comedy (or the address of 'the Booke to the Reader') is again written in a strain of careless good-humour, the author might seem to have here for once approached an attempt at delineating character. But, in point of fact, the transformation of Polymetes [2], who like Doctor Faustus [3], after as a fastidious frequenter of Universities ('I have seene some Schooles'), rejecting all professions, suddenly gives himself up to amorous delights, is contrived without care, or rather is not contrived at all. The most attractive element in the play is, according to Day's wont, the amusing talk of the page Joculo, who in the last act terrifies his wicked master by personating a ghost; but it also contains a pretty scene—that in which the Countess is discovered at work with her young gentlewomen—pervaded by a poetic melancholy in Desdemona's vein [4].

The remaining two plays printed with Day's name are of a homelier type, whether we term them comedies of adventure, or abstain from attempting to classify them under any common name. His share in them is not distinguishable from that of his fellow-writers[1], and the part contributed by him, although showing no want either of vigour or of will, may, except in a passage or two, be set down as more or less journeyman's work. The earlier of these plays was produced in 1600 in conjunction with Henry Chettle, and printed in 1659, under the title of *The Blind Beggar of Bednal-Green, with the merry humor of Tom Strowd the Norfolk Yeoman.* The personages of Tom Stroud, the good-natured Norfolk yeoman who in London becomes for the time 'a desperate castaway[2],' and his facetious man Swash the clown, endeared themselves so greatly to the pensive public that a continuation of the play, also called *simpliciter* the *Second Part of Thomas Stroud*, was brought out by Day, in conjunction with Haughton, in the same year 1600, and was followed up by them with a *Third Part* in the following year[3]. The modern reader, who may be pardoned for not feeling more than moderately exhilarated by fun of so bountiful a breadth[4], turns to the main plot of the piece, which owes nothing but a very general suggestion or two, and the names of Bess and Momford (Montfort), to the old ballad, printed in Percy's Reliques, of *The Beggar's Daughter of Bednall-Green*[5]. Lord Momford, a wronged soldier of the French Wars, in the disguise of a blind beggar tracks the guilt of his false accusers to discovery and exposure, and preserves the honour of his still more sorely-tried daughter Bess. Although the scene (act ii. sc. 3) where the supposed Blind Beggar finds his despairing daughter on the point of taking her own life

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[1] Attention may be directed to the repeated use in this play of the word 'pilgrimage' in a more or less figurative sense.

[2] His father, who in a well-contrived situation brings a letter with the news of his own death to his son, which the latter receives very cheerfully, exclaims:—

> '*Ouid*, not all thy Metamorphosis
> Can show such transformation . . .
> For the seauen liberall sciences a reades
> The seauen blacke deadly sinnes.' (Act iv. sc. 1.)

[3] This comparison has also occurred to Mr. Bullen.—In the latter part of the play (act iv. sc. 2) Polymetes is discovered in his study, casting a horoscope.

[4] In act iii. sc. 2.—This comedy contains one or two direct reminiscences of Shakspere, whose plays seem to have been constantly present to Day's mind. 'Have we not Hyren here?' occurs twice in the play; and Count Lurdo who trusts to his law-tricks is contemptuously designated (act i. sc. 1) as Justice *Slender* (*sic*).

The Blind Beggar of Bednal-Green (pr. 1659).

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[1] See however, as to *The Travels, &c.*, Fleay, *u. s.*, vol. ii. p. 277.

[2] 'London lickpenny,' he says, has left him 'as naked as your Norfolk Dumplin.' The term 'London lickpenny' is used as a proverbial phrase, without any reference to Lydgate's ballad, by so late a writer as Swift (in his *Journal to Stella, Letter xiii*).

[3] See Henslowe's *Diary*, pp. 180, 186, 188, &c.

[4] Day seems traceable in the academical flavour of the reply to the assertion of Young Stroud (when correcting the showman's announcement of 'the stabbing of Julius Caesar in the French capitol') that he remembers 'Tully's *Offices* says the capitol that Caesar was stab'd in was Rome': 'Impute the gross mistake to the fault of the Author.'—Mr. Fleay considers that this passage helps to fix the date of Shakspere's *Julius Caesar.*

[5] It is on this ballad that Sheridan Knowles founded his unlucky comedy of *The Beggar of Bethnal Green* (1828), printed in vol. i of his *Dramatic Works.*

is indisputably effective, its pathos remains stagey, and there is greater power in the later scene (act iv. sc. 2) where he saves her from a danger worse than death[1]. A serious underplot is also mixed up in the action, which boldly introduces the figures of Humphrey Duke of Gloucester and Cardinal 'Beuford' as plotting against one another for the hand of a rich ward, and the young King Henry VI winds up the play by some daring amendments to the records of history[2].

Day, William Rowley and George Wilkins' The Travels of the Three English Brothers Shirley (printed in 1607).

The curious composition called *The Travailes of the Three English Brothers, Sir Thomas, Sir Anthony, and Mr. Robert Shirley*, printed in 1607 'as it is now play'd,' might almost be described as a Chronicle History up to date. It was compiled, evidently without excess of deliberation, by Day, William Rowley, and George Wilkins out of the materials supplied in Anthony Nixon's tract *Three English Brothers, &c.*, printed in 1606. This pamphlet had been preceded by at least two others dealing with the adventures of the three celebrated brothers; but although Nixon had worked up his theme with a will and without any scruples as to accuracy, the dramatists found it possible further to heighten his colouring, and where they thought fit they distorted his facts[3].

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[1] Repulsive as is the realism of this scene, Young Playnsey's 'ravishing stride' has a terrible truthfulness.

[2] Lord Momford is appointed Lord High Treasurer, and his daughter's husband, Captain Westford, General 'of all our Forces muster'd up 'gainst France.'—In this last scene, by the way, there occurs the following audacious plagiarism:—

'*King*. Sir Walter Playnsey, by our Uncle's leave
I pray stand up; methinks those reverent hairs
Deserve a softer pillow than the ground.'

[3] Mr. Bullen has compared the statements of Nixon, 'still further exaggerated by the playwrights,' with those contained in the historical account of the adventures of his ancestors printed by Mr. E. P. Shirley for the Roxburghe Club, 1848; the same gentleman also published *Stemmata Shirleiana*, 1841, of which a new edition appeared in 1873. For lucid historical accounts of the lives of each of the three brothers, and of their father, see Mr. Sidney Lee's articles in vol. lii of *The Dictionary of National Biography*, 1897. The real Sir Anthony, who married a first cousin of the Earl of Essex, after, with the aid or at the invitation of the latter, engaging in divers enterprises countenanced neither by the Queen nor by Sir Robert Cecil, carried on a long series of diplomatic efforts in connexion with Eastern affairs. In the earliest of these, which had for its object the conclusion of a European

The construction of the play is of childish simplicity. The opening presents in a dumb-show the father of the three famous brothers sending forth the two younger—Anthony and Robert—in search of glory, while the eldest—Thomas—remains behind with him. We next find Anthony and Robert in Persia; where we behold the former, with the aid of further dumb-shows, dispersing the Sophy's foes and exemplifying the Christian virtue of clemency, and the latter chivalrously guarding a Turkish Bassa whose custody has been entrusted to him by his brother against the cruel arrogance of the Persian Halybeck (Ali Beg), who in the play is the evil genius of his brothers' career. He detests Sir Anthony for the honours bestowed on him by the grateful Sophy, and Robert because of the affection conceived for him by the Sophy's niece, who regards the hand of a Shirley as anything but a *mésalliance*[1]. Two successive Choruses waft Sir Anthony to Russia—where in dumb-show

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alliance against the Turk, he was hampered by the jealousy of the Persian noble accompanying him on his journey. (He also tried to open a trade-route from China through Persia and Muscovy.) He was afterwards employed on a mission to Morocco by the Emperor Rudolf II, and finally found his way to Madrid, where he met and quarrelled with his brother Robert, and, after involving himself in all sorts of plots and projects, died in distress sometime after 1635. In 1613 he had published an account of his *Travels into Persia*, on which he had been accompanied by this brother. Robert Shirley, who was afterwards knighted by the Sophy (Shah), remained behind in Persia when Sir Anthony quitted it on his diplomatic mission, was of great service in disciplining and instructing the Sophy's army, and married a Christian kinswoman of one of the Circassian wives of that potentate. In 1608 he was himself sent to Europe on a mission similar to his brother Anthony's, in the course of which he was well received by King James I. He returned to Persia in 1615. and two years afterwards started on a second mission, which again brought him to the English Court. On his return to the Persian Court at Kazveen in 1628 he was denounced as an impostor by the Shah's favourite Mahomet Ali Beg, and died very soon afterwards. Sir Thomas Shirley the younger's experiences seem to have been unconnected with those of his two younger brothers. After military service in the Low Countries and Ireland, and privateering adventures in various waters, he was in 1603, after an imprudent descent upon the island of Zea, captured by the Turks, and not set free from his prison in Constantinople till 1605. At home he fell into difficulties, and died about 1630 in the Isle of Wight. At different periods of his career he had sat in Parliament. He was twice married; his second son from his first marriage (which gave great offence to Queen Elisabeth) was the dramatist Henry Shirley.

[1] 'All Persia sings,
The English Brothers are Coe-mates for Kings.'

he overcomes the intrigues of his official companion, no other than the wicked Halybeck—and to Rome. Having next witnessed the capture of Sir Thomas Shirley at 'Ieo' and his forcible removal to Constantinople, we are transported to Venice, where Sir Anthony hears of the imprisonment of his elder brother. Here we meet with two unexpected figures. Zariph the Jew, who has sold a magnificent jewel to Sir Anthony, by Halybeck's device secures the arrest of the Christian purchaser for non-payment. The ranting talk of Zariph is a sort of parody of the language of Shylock;—and a more gratuitous insult has hardly ever been offered to any of Shakspere's creations[1]. Another character, dragged in so to speak by the hairs, is that of Kemp, the actor of low comedy parts, who here too is called 'jesting Will,' and who enacts a scene of tomfoolery with 'an Italian Harlaken[2].' After this we return to the Persian Court, where Sir Robert, now commander of the forces, triumphs over the devices of his adversaries and weds the Sophy's niece. Halybeck's devices against Sir Anthony are in their turn exposed, and Sir Thomas, after having been put in the stocks and then racked on the stage, is released from captivity at the direct instance of the King of England. Thus all things have been brought to a successful issue; and after the spectators have been edified by the christening (in dumb-show) of Sir Robert's firstborn in the presence of the Sophy [1], a final dumb-show rapidly disposes of all the three brothers. 'Fame gives to each a prospective glasse; they seme to see one another' from their respective stations in England, Spain, and Persia, 'and offer to embrace, at which Fame parts them, and so: *Exeunt.*' Fame remains to speak an explanatory epilogue, and thus closes an exemplification, unsurpassed in its way, of the kind of stimulus the 'forward' politicians of the earlier Jacobean age no doubt encouraged the playwrights to administer to their public [2].

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[1] I quote a specimen:—

'A hundreth thousand Duckats! sweete remembrance!
Ile reade it again;—a hundreth thousand Duckats!
Sweeter still! Who owes it? A Christian,
Canaan's brood. Honnie to my joyful soule;
If this summe faile (my bond unsatisfied)
Hee's in the Iewe's mercy;—mercy! Ha, ha!
The Lice of Ægipt shall devoure them all
Ere I shew mercy to a Christian,' &c.

It appears from Mr. Bullen's account that Sir Thomas Shirley, when a prisoner at Constantinople, was befriended by a kind-hearted Jew, and that this statement was adapted by the dramatists in the generous way indicated.

[2] Cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 472 *note*. Mr. Fleay thinks that the allusion to Kemp's readiness for extemporal acting confirms the conjecture that Hamlet's censure of clowns who 'speak more than is set down for them' refers to this famous performer. It is worth noting, in connexion with the appearance of Kemp in *The Return from Parnassus*, that the scene of *The Three Brothers* in which he takes part is assigned by Mr. Fleay to Day.

His place among his fellow-dramatists.

In the literary endowment of John Day there was, so far as we can judge from the small proportion of his plays that has come down to us, little or nothing that can be described as essentially dramatic. His power of construction was small, and he seems to have barely if ever troubled himself about the drawing of character. He delighted in far-fetched allegorical fancies, and in dialogue elaborated for dialogue's sake. When disporting himself in the exercises which were most congenial to him he certainly showed himself full both of grace—except in his too frequent lapses into indecency—and of wit; and the airiness of his desipience often presents a refreshing contrast to the more measured gaiety of Lyly, whose literary tendencies he in some measure shared [3]. His trifling was too evanescent to impair seriously the influence of the Arcadian romance towards which he assumed a half-ironical position; but in the history of English comedy he should not be altogether overlooked. The greater part of his work was probably manufactured for the market with the utmost possible speed, and even if it were preserved to us, would largely remain undistinguishable from that of other men, frequently perhaps of inferior talent.

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[1] The Sophy has previously approved of the establishment in his dominions of a Christian church and school.—The christening-show may conceivably have been suggested by that at the close of *Henry VIII*; but this possibly cannot be held to affect the question of the date of that play.

[2] The following is an admirable combination of an appeal to the memories of the past, with a tribute to the wisdom of the present:

> 'All Princes league with us, which causeth us,
> That want to write our honours downe in bloud,
> Cold and unactive.'—

Fine passages are not superabundant in this play; but the following appeal from the Englishman to the Persian is powerfully put:

> 'We all are punisht by the self-same rod;
> Our sins are all alike,—why not our God?'

[3] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 302 as to *The Maid's Metamorphosis*, which cannot be safely ascribed to either dramatist.

Other dramatists of this period.

Besides the above-mentioned writers, the names of many other dramatists whose contributions to the popular stage belong in part at least to this period have been preserved to us; and in the case of a few of them an isolated play remains to testify to the nature of their literary powers. Of the thirty authors mentioned in Henslowe's *Diary* as having received pay from him during the years from 1598 to 1601, several of whom wrote for other companies besides those under his control, some whose names are worthy of preservation have been noted in previous chapters[1]. A few may be mentioned here, as belonging in point of time to be included in the group of Shakspere's contemporaries rather than in that of his predecessors—though of course neither term can be quite safely employed in the case of writers as to the dates of whose literary labours we are so imperfectly informed.

Henry Porter's The Two Angry Women of Abington (pr. 1599).

Of HENRY PORTER, whom Meres in his *Palladis Tamia* (1598) mentions as one of 'the best for Comedy amongst us,' and who co-operated as a playwright with Chettle and Jonson, only a single play is extant. The gaiety of *The Two Angrie Women of Abington; with the Humorous Mirth of Dick Coomes and Nicholas Proverbes, two Serving Men* (printed 1599[2]), is however such as to make us wish that other comedies of his besides this had been preserved. Charles Lamb, however, perhaps goes rather far in describing it as 'no whit inferior to either *The*

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[1] For a complete list see Collier, vol. ii. p. 485. It includes the name of John Webster, whose extant independently written plays all appeared after the accession of James I. See also Mr. Fleay's valuable List of Authors, 1559–1642, among the Index Lists appended to his *Chronicle History of the London Stage*.

[2] Edited by Dyce for vol. vi of the *Percy Society's Publications* (1841); and reprinted in vol. vii of Hazlitt's *Dodsley* and in the *Mermaid Series* (1888).

Comedy of Errors or *The Taming of the Shrew*, for instance,' among the contemporary earliest Shaksperean comedies. Although here and there it contains passages of true elegance of diction, its humour on the whole has a rather archaic flavour; indeed, I hardly know of any other Elisabethan comedy which so vividly recalls the downright style of old John Heywood, and this not only by its amusing proverbial philosophy. The conception of the plot is in itself diverting enough; two 'curst wives,' whose temper reveals itself over a game at 'tables' in the beginning of the comedy, do their utmost to render their husbands unhappy, and to prevent a desirable match between the children of the two houses. This popular theme is treated with unflagging spirit, notwithstanding the seemingly unnecessary complications of the plot towards the close. Among the minor personages will be noted the serving-man, Nicholas Proverbes, who garnishes his speech in Sancho Panza's style, together with the pleasantly sketched figure of the country squire's lady, who has a horror of field-sports, and is almost as 'pitous' towards animals as Chaucer's Prioress.

William Haughton's Englishmen for my Money (*pr.* 1616):

WILLIAM HAUGHTON, whose name has frequently occurred in this book as that of joint-author in plays to which Chettle, Day and other well-known dramatists contributed[1], and who shared the evil fortunes as well as the successes of divers of his brother-playwrights[2], has left behind him in print a single play of which he is stated to have been the sole author. *English-Men for my Money, or A Woman will have her Will*, mentioned by Henslowe in 1598 under the earlier of these titles, but not extant in an earlier edition than that of 1616, appears to have been a highly popular play. It is a merry and bustling comedy of London life, showing forth how the three daughters of a 'Portingal' usurer and their three English lovers carry the day over their money-loving father (whose nose is an index to his line of trade) and the three benighted foreigners,—a Frenchman, a Dutchman and an Italian—in vain favoured by him. Anthony, an intriguing schoolmaster hailing from Oxford[1], and Frisco, a bungling clown, help to carry on the action, which is extremely brisk.

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[1] Among various other works he took in hand was a revision of *Ferrex and Porrex*, on which he was engaged in 1599. See Henslowe's *Diary*, p. 166.

[2] Earlier in the same month Henslowe lent to him (at second-hand) the sum of ten shillings to release him 'owt of the clyncke.' *Ib.*

and the Devil and his Dame (Grim the Collier of Croydon), 1600.

There can be little doubt but that the comedy called *Grim, the Collier of Croydon*[2] (said by one authority to have been printed as early as 1599, but the first known copy which ascribes the authorship of the play to 'I. T.' bears the date of 1662) is identical with Haughton's *The Devil and his Dame*, mentioned in Henslowe's *Diary* under the date of March 1600[3]. This play re-introduced to the English stage a personage of very ancient notoriety on its boards[4]. But the Collier and his doings have only a secondary share in the action of this extraordinary drama, which (like one of Dekker's and in a less degree one of Jonson's comedies[5]) turns on the idea of an emissary being sent by the 'consistory' of the infernal regions to ascertain the true state of things as to married life in the upper world. Accompanied by his servant Akercock, whose name recalls that of the evil spirit Auerhan in the *Wagnerbuch*, published in an English version in 1594, but who in the play assumes the native designation of Robin Goodfellow, he visits England, where he thinks to secure the hand of the daughter of the Earl of Kent, after curing her father of dumbness, but has to content himself with the lady's waiting-maid, and fares ill even with her. Among the remaining characters is St. Dunstan, who appears as a kind of presenter.

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[1] Haughton has on insufficient evidence been identified with a namesake, an Oxford M.A., who was incorporated at Cambridge in 1604.

[2] Reprinted in vol. iii of *The Ancient British Drama*, and in vol. viii of Hazlitt's *Dodsley*.

[3] Strictly speaking, Henslowe only mentions that he advanced to Haughton the sum of five shillings 'in earneste of a Boocke which he wold calle the Devell and his dame' (*Diary*, p. 169). As to the identity of the two plays see Collier, vol. ii. p. 411 *note*, and Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. i. p. 273.

[4] See *ante*, vol. i. pp. 134 and 212.

[5] See *ante*, p. 465, as to *If it be not good, the Devil is in it*, and p. 372 as to *The Devil is an Ass*. I think that Dr. Herford has not noticed the play mentioned in the text. Cf. below as to Wilson's *Belphegor*.

Richard Hathway.

Wentworth Smith.

George Wilkins.

His Miseries of Enforced Marriage (pr. 1607).

Among the dramatists in Henslowe's pay were also RICHARD HATHWAY, who may very possibly have been a connexion of the Warwickshire family from which Shakspere took his wife,—WENTWORTH SMITH, whose initials caused some confusion to persons intent upon crowning Shakspere's honoured head with doubtful laurels[1], —and GEORGE WILKINS, who has been on grounds not to be set aside as flimsy suspected of the joint authorship of one of the plays received into the Shaksperean canon[2]. No play has been preserved written independently either by Hathway, who was much associated with artificers of the more rudimentary species of the historical drama, including Anthony Munday, as well as with Day and others, —or by Wentworth Smith, unless a fair case should be held to have been made out for this prolific dramatist's authorship of the still extant 'Honourable Hystorie' of *The Hector of Germanie*, or *The Palsgrave, Prime Elector*, written in 1613, in honour of the popular marriage of the Princess Elisabeth, and printed as 'by W. Smith' in 1616[3]. George Wilkins' *The Miseries of Inforst Marriage*, printed in 1607, and repeatedly reprinted[4], is a harrowing domestic drama on part of the same story as that treated in *A Yorkshire Tragedy*, where occasional touches seem to indicate the presence of Shakspere's hand[5]. The dramatic conception, it must be allowed, shows power; but the execution is very lengthy. It contains what appears to be a reminiscence from *Othello*, but may have been a quasi-proverbial commonplace[1]. MARTIN SLATER (the name is variously spelt), with whom Henslowe had many dealings, seems as a dramatic author to have dealt occasionally with classical themes of a very lofty sort[2].

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[1] Wentworth Smith has been thought to have been the author of *Locrine*, *The Puritan*, and of *The Life and Death of Thomas Cromwell*, both of which were printed with the initials W. S. and have been attributed to Shakspere. See *ante*, pp. 220, 230, and 234.

[2] See above, pp. 183–4, as to *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, where will be found some notes as to Wilkins' literary labours.

[3] See Mr. E. Irving Carlyle's notice of Wentworth Smith in vol. liii of *The Dictionary of National Biography* (1898). Mr. Fleay has not quite given up 'William' Smith. A copy of the play is in the Dyce Library. In the *Journal of Sir Walter Scott* (1890), vol. i. p. 234, there is a criticism of this play worth extracting. Scott says of it that, although 'worthless in the extreme,' it 'is like many plays in the beginning of the seventeenth century *written to a good tune.* The dramatic poets of that time seem to have possessed as joint stock a highly poetical and abstract tone of language, and that the worst of them often remind you of the very best. The audience must have had a much stronger sense of poetry than that now.'

[4] Reprinted in Dodsley's *Old Plays*, vol. v (1825), and in vol. ix of Hazlitt's *Dodsley*.

[5] Cf. *ante*, p. 231 and *note*. Wilkins' play was in part adapted (and

Martin Slater.

John Cooke's Greene's Tu Quoque *pr.* 1599?).

Among writers not mentioned by Henslowe JOHN COOKE deserves notice as the author of *Greene's Tu Quoque, or The Citie Gallant*[3], which according to a doubtful authority was printed as early as 1599; the first extant edition is dated 1614. He is supposed to have been the J. Cooke who was the author of fifty epigrams, entered in 1604 in the Stationers' Registers. The great popularity which his play seems to have enjoyed was doubtless due to the acting of Thomas Greene, famous in clowns' parts, from whose performance of the character of Bubble the comedy derived the name by which it is remembered[4]. The satire of the piece is directed against the upstarts of the City. Beginning as a comedy of character, it lapses into one of intrigue, and contains some offensive passages. Bubble is a serving-man who on becoming wealthy apes the manners and phrases ('Tu Quoque' in particular) of the fashionable world. The 'swaggerer' in this play is of the family of Ancient Pistol.

How a Man may Choose a Good

The anonymous comedy entitled *How a Man may Chuse a Good Wife from a Bad*[5] is by a manuscript annotator of

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degraded in the process) by Mrs. Aphra Behn in *The Town Fop, or Sir Timothy Tawdrey* (acted 1676), where a divorce conveniently solves the difficulty of the situation.

[1] 'Women are in churches saints, abroad angels, at home devils' (act i).

[2] See Henslowe's *Diary*, p. 123, where there is an entry of a loan of £7 to the company to buy five books of Martin 'Slather,' called the Two Parts of *Hercules*, *Focasse*, *Pythagoras*, and *Alexander and Lodowick* (cf. *ante*, p. 577, *note* 1). Mr. Fleay includes him in his list of actors only.

[3] Reprinted in vol. ii of *The Ancient British Drama* and in vol. xi of Hazlitt's *Dodsley*.

[4] This Greene or Green, according to Mr. Fleay, died in 1612, which fixes a posterior limit for the date of the play.

[5] Reprinted in vol. ix of Hazlitt's *Dodsley*.

a copy of the edition (the earliest extant) of 1602 attributed to 'Joshua' Cooke, by mistake as has been supposed[1] for John. In any case the play, which went through several editions after that of 1602, displays much wit and literary ability. The plot, said to be founded on one of Giraldi Cinthio's tales, is the story of a husband who, after repudiating the devotion of a loving wife for the charms of a courtesan, and—as he thinks—ridding himself of the former by poison so as to be able to marry her rival, finds that he has reaped the just reward of his criminal folly. The wicked Mistress Mary accuses him of the crime which he had for her sake intended to commit; but he is saved by the faithful wife whom he had been ready to immolate. Several of the characters in this play are drawn with uncommon distinctness, and the writing abounds in wit. Old Master Lusam, invariably willing to assent to the last proposal placed before him,—Justice Reason, who delivers himself with the most sonorous gravity of *dicta* signifying nothing.—Sir Aminadab, a pedantic schoolmaster full of quotations from the Latin grammar,—and the serving-man Pipkin, an irrepressible buffoon,—are alike effective comic figures; while the anecdotes related by the cynical Master Fuller for the encouragement of his more bashful friend are amusing, although not edifying, illustrations of the Ovidian Art of Love. Sir Aminadab, by the way, is prone to talking in hexameters, leonine and other.

Wife from a Bad (*pr.* 1602).

The popular drama of this period also comprises one or two works which, while more or less interesting on their own account, exhibit certain features that carry us back to a more primitive phase of our national drama. Among these is the 'most pleasant and merie new Comedie' of *A Knacke to Knowe a Knave, with Kemp's applauded Merriments of the men of Gotcham, in receiving the King into Gotcham* (printed in 1594, as repeatedly played by Alleyn and his company)[2]. This production, besides being generally old-fashioned in both construction and style, consists of two actions not very organically fitted into one

A Knack to Know a Knave (*pr.* 1594).

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[1] See Halliwell-Phillipps' *Dictionary*, &c.

[2] Printed in Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, vol. vi.

another[1]. The scene is laid in England in the reign of King Edgar the Peaceful, and Dunstan appears on the stage, without his traditional accomplishments in the magical art being forgotten. The King sends his nephew Ethelwald to woo the fair Alfrida as his proxy, but the nephew woos her on his own account and secures her hand. His attempts to deceive his royal uncle having been duly exposed, and Dunstan having (for no very transparent purpose) summoned the Devil to his assistance, Ethelwald is finally forgiven by Edgar[2]. The remainder of the play is occupied with Honesty's successful exposure of knavery, especially in the case of the four hopeful sons of the Bailiff of Hexham (a Courtier, a Priest, a Coney-catcher, and a Farmer), who endeavour *pro virili parte* to carry out the pious dying injunctions of their father, after he has himself been carried off by the Devil early in the piece. A comic interlude is furnished by the 'merrimentes' of the men of Gotham, in receiving the King into their town. The famous Kemp bore a part in this amusing scene, which must have been a great favourite, and was doubtless supplemented by the 'gag' usual in such cases[3].

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[1] Mr. Fleay, *u. s.*, vol. ii. pp. 310–11, conjectures that the portion relating to Edgar and Alfrida was written by Peele, and that of which Honesty is the hero by Robert Wilson, the author of *The Three Ladies of London* (cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 140, *note*).

[2] The story of Ethelwald and Elfrida, derived from the old 'Song of King Edgar, showing how he was deceived of his Love,' is the subject of several later plays—Ravenscroft's *King Edward and Alfreda* (printed 1667); Rymer's *Edgar, or The English Monarch* (licensed 1677; for a comparison of these two plays see Genest, vol. i. p. 223); Aaron Hill's *Elfrid* (1710; afterwards remodelled under the title of *Athelwold* (1732); and Mason's *Elfrida* (1752; altered for the stage by Colman in 1772, and by the author himself in 1779). Collier has pointed out the resemblance between this part of the plot of *A Knack to Know a Knave* and the charming episode in Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (printed 1594); there is a still closer resemblance between parts of the action and that of Massinger's *Great Duke of Florence*.

[3] The scene opens with all the freshness which on the stage is a sure indication that what follows will not fall flat:

'*Miller.* Now, let us constult among ourselves,
How to misbehave ourselves to the king's worship'—

but Collier (see his account of Kemp in *Memoirs of the Principal Actors, &c.*, p. 97) is doubtless right in supposing the real fun of the 'merriments' to have been left to be supplied by the actors. Cf. as to Kemp's extemporising

Altogether this play seems to have enjoyed an exceptional popularity[1].

The Life and Death of Jack Straw (*pr.* 1593).

The Life and Death of Jack Strawe (printed 1593[2]) is a vigorous reproduction of a well-known episode of English history, apparently designed for the special gratification of the citizens of London. Written partly in blank-verse, partly in doggrel rimed lines, it is devoid neither of vivacity nor of rough humour; and some insight into historical truth is shown in the speeches of King Richard, to whose kindliness of heart towards the lower orders justice is done. The play (which has only four acts) was however evidently written with haste, and is only valuable as a genuine remnant of the popular stage[3].

Look About You (*pr.* 1600).

A similar production is the 'Pleasant Commodie called *Looke About You*[4]' (printed 1600), which by any other name might have equally diverted the groundlings. This odd specimen of the Chronicle-History run to riot treats of events connected with the resistance of the sons of King Henry II to their father's authority, and especially of the

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powers, *ante*, p. 602, *note*.—*The Merry Tales of the Mad Men of Gotham*, published in the latter part of the reign of Henry VIII, have been attributed without evidence to Andrew Boorde. A reference to the 'Wise Men of Gottum' occurs in *Misogonus* (1560).

[1] Its success gave rise, in the same year 1594, to the production of a counterpart called *A Knack to Know an Honest Man*, of which the scene is laid at Venice; Collier (*Introduction*, in *Dodsley*, p. 26) adds other illustrations of the popularity of the piece.—The typical character of Piers Plowman, as the representative of the 'poor' and oppressed 'commons,' will not be overlooked. Its popularity had been revived by Robert Crowley's publication of Langland's *Vision* in 1550; and the *Crede* was printed soon afterwards—probably in 1553. (See Professor Skeat's Preface to his edition of Pierce the Ploughman's Crede, *Publications of the Early English Text Society*, 1867.)

[2] Reprinted in vol. v of Hazlitt's *Dodsley*.—Is there any authority in the books for the test of tongue imposed by the rebels upon the obnoxious foreign merchants,

> 'As many of you as cannot say bread and cheese
> In good and perfect English, ye die for it'?

To which an unfortunate Fleming can only reply *Broed and Keyse* (act ii). The device is a familiar one in the history of popular risings against a hated foreign element in the land.

[3] Mr. Fleay, *u. s.*, vol. i. p. 153, while attributing this play on what seem quite insufficient grounds to Peele, thinks that it was written in 1587; although as he says there is no notice in it of the coming Armada.

[4] Printed in vol. vii of Hazlitt's *Dodsley*.

adventures of the faithful and outspoken Earl of Gloucester[1]. I hardly know of any other play in which so many persons assume so many disguises. Skink, who opens the series in that of a hermit, is especially busy; but the Princes, Lady Faulconbridge, and 'Robert Hood' likewise bear their part. The result is an action of peculiar briskness; but there are occasional touches of real dramatic vigour, and in one passage (Richard's praise of music in scene the twenty-eighth) even of poetic feeling. A more strangely, and in one sense 'artfully,' managed action than that of this play it would be difficult to imagine.

Wily Beguiled (*pr.* 1606).

Wily Beguiled[2], although not printed till 1606, was clearly written at a considerably earlier date. It must, however, have been composed after the production of both *The Merchant of Venice*, a famous passage in which it adopts or parodies[3], and *Romeo and Juliet*[4]. The play is extremely simple in texture as well as in style, but there is a freshness and a boyish gaiety about the piece which might almost induce one to invert Mr. Fleay's conjecture that it was 'written for a London audience, and adapted for a University performance.' Design and moral alike have a frank juvenility, and *Sophos*, whose scholarly accomplishments are repeatedly referred to and exhibited by himself, is just the kind of hero to have suited a Cambridge audience[5]. The impression left by the vivacious artificiality of both the action and the diction of this piece resembles that produced by a French or Italian *Pierrot*-play, where the drollery is at the same time conventional and buoyant; and the temptation is no doubt strong to suspect Peele of its authorship, more especially in view of the 'humorous George' of the *Prologue*. But while so far inclining to Mr. Fleay's views concerning this comedy, I must confess myself quite unable to follow his argument, that *Wily Beguiled* is at bottom a personal satire, in which on opposite sides Jonson and Drayton are involved[1].

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[1] As Anthony Wadeson is mentioned by Henslowe (*Diary*, p. 183 *et al.*) as the author of a play called *The Honourable Life of the Humorous Earl of Gloster with his Conquest of Portugal*, Mr. Fleay, *u. s.*, vol. ii. p. 266, confidently assigns *Look About You* to the same writer.

[2] Printed in vol. iii of Hawkins' *Origin of the English Drama*, and in vol. ix of Hazlitt's *Dodsley*. Collier, vol. iii. p. 245 *note*, inserts an Epilogue to be found in the Duke of Devonshire's copy of the 1606 impression.

[3] 'In such a night did Paris win his love,' &c.

[4] In the Nurse's talk, and perhaps also elsewhere.—The Robin Goodfellow of this play is a very different sort of personage from him of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.—In his *Thomas Kyd und sein Kreis* (Berlin, 1892), pp. 76–7, Professor G. Sarrazin has shown that a considerable number of passages in *The Spanish Tragedy*, and some in *Solyman and Perseda*, are imitated or parodied in *Wily Beguiled*.

[5] Churms too, it may be noted, was 'at Cambridge a scholar' before he was a soldier 'at Cales,' i. e. at Cadiz in 1596 (which may help to date the play), and a lawyer in the country.—Mr. Fleay compares the expression

Literary dramas.

From these plays designed for, or at least enacted on, the popular stage I turn, by a more or less abrupt transition, to certain productions in dramatic form composed in a spirit little in harmony with the spirit of the later Elisabethan theatre. A large proportion of these indeed belong to a period lying beyond that whose creations I have attempted to survey in the present chapter; but the earliest of them were composed before the death of Elisabeth; and no system of arrangement would succeed in harmonising them in a body with the general current of the dramatic literature with which they coincided in date.

Sir Philip Sidney, resenting the assumption of the politic convert Gosson that he was the players' foe, had in his immortal *Apology for Poetry* sought to discriminate between true tragedy and comedy, and the adulterate commingling of both branches according to the practice

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'Momus' mates' in the *Prologue* with the introduction of Momus as a personage in the *Prologue* to *Part II* of *The Return from Parnassus*. The final 'Plaudite' is likewise in keeping.

[1] Under the characters of Fortunatus and Robin Goodfellow. The former personage has no connexion except in name with the hero of the popular story-book and of Dekker's play; the latter is here a rogue who on one occasion assumes the character of a demon.—Mr. Fleay thinks that the 'man of reach,' Churms' *sobriquet* of 'Wily,' is taken from *The Pinner of Wakefield*. Cf. in the furious verses against Sir Walter Ralegh printed in Halliwell-Phillipps' *Poetical Miscellanies from a MS. Collection of the time of James I* (*Percy Society's Publications*, vol. xv), p. 13, beginning 'Wilye Wat, wilie Wat,' the stanza:

'Make the best of thy plea,
Least the rest goe awaie,
And thou brought for to saie
Wily beguilie.'

of the contemporary stage. Although in his *Arcadia* he undesignedly furnished materials for the use of many a dramatist, his own solitary contribution to our dramatic literature was the text of the masque of *The Lady of May*, presented to Queen Elisabeth on the occasion of her visit to his uncle Leicester's seat at Wanstead in May 1578[1]. There is nothing out of the common either in the argument of this masque—in which the Queen's Grace is invited to decide, as in actual life she often decided unasked, between the suitors of a fair maiden, while a pedantic schoolmaster Rombus provides the humour as a 'Latin-fool' with his '*O tempori, O Moribus*,' and the like.

Sir Philip Sidney's The Lady of May (*performed* 1578: *pr.* 1598).

Tragedies by Sir Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke (1554–1628).

Of a very different complexion and substance are the two tragedies composed by Sidney's kinsman, friend and biographer, Sir Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke[2]. Charles Lamb, who never penned a more felicitously expressed criticism than his *envoi* to the extracts given by him from these tragedies, observes that they 'might with more propriety have been termed political treatises than plays,' and that their author shows himself in them 'nine parts Machiavel and Tacitus, for one part Sophocles or Seneca.' Yet even as the tragedies stand, they fail to do full justice to the original design of the writer, who informs us that he had at first intended the 'treatises,' now printed separately and extending to much the same length as the tragedies themselves, to serve as choruses to the several acts of the latter[3], in addition no doubt to the choruses proper, for the most part tolerably lengthy in themselves, already appended to them. On the difficult style and the profundity of meaning which characterise the treatises there is no need for descanting here; but even in the tragedies as they stand, in the dialogue as well as in the purely didactic—they cannot be called lyric—excursuses, the language is extremely obscure. This is the result, not of ambiguity or vagueness of diction, but of a closeness as well as abstruseness of thought to which to all intents and purposes no reader will prove equal unless he approaches these so-called dramas as a student addresses himself to a set of long series of problems. It is this peculiarity of style—a peculiarity extending to almost everything that he has left behind him in verse [1]—which must continue to leave Lord Brooke's tragedies unread except by a resolute few. Seneca and Euripides, whom he generally though not slavishly [2] follows as his dramatic models, are not responsible for what is the reverse of a rhetorical, and only as it were incidentally a sententious, style. It should be added that there are to be found in these strange compositions not only characters as strongly conceived as they are subtly worked out, but situations full of awe and pathos; but everything, to recur to Lamb's inimitable phraseology, is 'frozen and made rigid with intellect.'

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[1] It was printed with the *Arcadia* in the edition of 1598, and is reprinted in vol. iii of the 1724 edition of Sidney's *Works*, and in vol. ii of Nichols' *Progresses of Elisabeth*.

[2] Reprinted in vol. iii of Dr. Grosart's edition of Lord Brooke's *Works* in *The Fuller Worthies' Library* (1870).

[3] See his own account of his tragedies, in his *Life of the Renowned Sir Philip Sidney*, in vol. iv of Dr. Grosart's edition, pp. 150 *seqq.*

Both Lord Brooke's tragedies were first printed in the folio edition of his works, printed five years after his murder; but they were written in his younger days, and *Mustapha* is praised in some lines by John Davies of Hereford, printed probably in 1611 [3]. The earlier of the two tragedies (according to the arrangement in the folio) is simply entitled *Alaham*, and its scene is placed in Ormus, an island which, according to Langbaine, is situated at the entrance of the Persian Gulf. In a *Prologus* of over-

Alaham (*pr.* 1633).

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[1] Very notably his *Caelica*—a collection of one hundred and ten so-called 'Sonnets.'—In the lines on Sidney there are some of which the accent goes straight to the heart.

[2] Thus it may be noticed that in *Alaham* Hala kills Caine's child *coram populo*.

[3] Included in the edition of *The Scourge of Folly* ascribed by Dr. Grosart to that date. See his edition of *The Complete Works of John Davies of Hereford* in *The Chertsey Worthies' Library* (1878), vol. ii. p. 53. He says of the tragedy that

> 'No line but reaches to the firmament
> Of highest sense, from surest ground of wit;
> No word but is like Phebus luculent.'

John Davies died in 1618.)

powering gloom the Ghost of one of the old Kings of Ormus ascends from the depths of Hades to announce that all the sins of his line are about to come home as curses to its last representatives, and analyses with terrible power of insight the characters of his doomed descendants. Then the plot begins slowly to work itself out. Urged on by his abandoned wife Hala, Alaham, the second son of the old King, brings about the deposition of his father, and puts out his eyes and those of the imbecile heir; in their desolation they are protected by the King's daughter—one of those characters in which the author seeks to embody his lofty conception of womanhood [1]. She shares their cruel fate, which is in the last act narrated to Alaham by a Nuntius; filled with remorse and horror, he survives only long enough to include his adulterous wife as a murderess in the common doom of all that was his [2].

Mustapha (*pr.* 1633).

In *Mustapha* there is no change of style or of external form. The metre of the dialogue, too, is the same, viz. a mixture of rimed quatrains and couplets with occasional blank verse. The Choruses at the close of the acts consist of various groups, and their discourse is connected with the action only through the suggestion of thought by thought [3]. But the action of *Mustapha*, which seems to have been derived from an episode of French romance [4], is on the whole less opaque than that of *Alaham.* The personages, too—Mustapha the high-minded heir to the throne, Rossa the scheming Sultana who seeks to effect his destruction so as to make possible the succession of her own son Zanger, and Camena his noble-hearted step-sister—appeal less remotely to human interest than the sepulchral dynasty of Ormus. The final speech of Rossa, whose own children have in life and in death rebelled against her ruthless ambition, plunges us once more into a metaphysical abyss. For her there is no mercy, for in her there is no trust; die she will not, for death ends pain; with the evil and the passion she bears away with her she will set 'all hearts, all times, all worlds on fire.'

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[1] The Ghost says of her and her fate that

'in flesh no seedes are sowne
Of heavenly grace, but must bring up weedes.'

This is an example of Lord Brooke's cryptic mode of expression. Caelica—like Camena in *Mustapha*—is a kind of petrified Cordelia.

[2] 'You wand'ring spirits frame me in your Hell;
I feele my brother and my sister there.
Where is my wife? There lacks no more but shee;
Let all my owne together dwell with me.'

[3] See for instance the curious contribution in *Chorus Tertius*—a dialogue between Time and Eternity—to the theory of revolution; and the protracted discussion of the relations between Church and State in *Chorus Quartus*, of 'Converts to Mahometisme.' The striking *Chorus Sacerdotum* at the close of the play is however clear enough in its scepticism:

'When each of us in his owne heart lookes,
He findes the God there farre unlike his bookes.'

[4] This must have been the episode of *Mustapha et Zéangir* in Madeleine de Scudéry's *Ibrahim ou l'Illustre Bassa* (1641), on which her brother

Samuel Daniel (1562–1619).

SAMUEL DANIEL (1562–1629), who holds in our literature the place which in the equanimity of his self-knowledge he felt to be reserved for him, made his first appearance as a poet in a series of sonnets published without his sanction in the same volume with *Astrophel and Stella*; and 'Sidney's sister' was the earliest and most sympathetic of his patrons. The exquisite beauty of his sonnets, fully recognized by Wordsworth, Coleridge, and many of their contemporaries, has become a commonplace of literary criticism; but he seems himself to have thought narrative poetry best fitted to influence the minds of men, and to have desired to rest his chief title to poetic fame upon his epic of the *Civil Wars* (of Lancaster and York), which Meres placed side by side with Lucan's *Pharsalia*[1]. Some of his fellow-poets were, however, inclined to prefer his prose to his poetry—or rather, in the case of the most critical among them, to assert that he was 'no poet[2].' Besides his *History of England* he wrote a very sensible and conclusive *Defence of Ryme* (1602) against Campion, which Jonson, according to his statement, followed up with a *Discourse of Poesie* against both combatants[3]. Dramatic gifts Daniel possessed in no eminent

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Georges founded a play (1642), and which inspired other French dramatists, as well as Lord Orrery in his *Mustapha* (1665).

[1] Cf. *ante*, p. 103, as to Daniel's *Civil Wars* and Shakspere's *Richard II.*

[2] Jonson's *Conversations, &c.*, iii.

[3] *Ib.*, i.—In R. Tailor's *The Hog hath lost his Pearl* (pr. 1614), act ii, he

degree; but apart from the prominent position which he occupied as a masque-writer favoured by Queen Anne, and the jealousy which he provoked in consequence, his two attempts in tragedy have secured for him a place of his own —of what kind I shall immediately seek to indicate—in our dramatic literature. As a mark of the royal favour, he was in 1604 appointed licenser of the plays performed by the Children of the Queen's Revels at Bristol, in the neighbourhood of which city he was residing, and he was subsequently named Gentleman of the Queen's Privy Chamber[1].

His tragedies.

Daniel's two tragedies[2] stand almost isolated in our literature as aftergrowths of the early school of English dramatic writers who deliberately chose Seneca for their model as a tragic dramatist. Unlike the French, and in a less degree certain other modern dramatic literatures, our own, after at a critical point in its early history it had been subjected in a most marked degree to the direct and indirect influence of the Latin tragedian[3], threw off this subjection with relative speed and with definitive decision. The transitory return to the abandoned path of Daniel and one or two contemporary writers cannot be said to have exercised any effect upon the general progress of our drama; and in themselves none of these attempts call for more than a very brief notice.

Cleopatra (pr. 1594).

Cleopatra, first printed in 1594, re-issued, according to its fastidious author's wont, in a revised form with other works in 1599, and again revised for later editions, was dedicated to the Countess of Pembroke. It professed, in terms of humble self-depreciation, to present itself as a companion-

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is, with a humorous allusion to his masque of *Hymen's Triumph*, referred to as 'the learned historiographer.'

[1] See Mr. Lee's notice of Daniel in vol. xiv of *The Dictionary of National Biography* (1888), and cf. Mr. Fleay's account of his career in *English Drama*, vol. i. pp. 84 *seqq.*, where an elaborate attempt is made to identify him with Hedon in Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels*.

[2] Daniel's tragedies and masques fill vol. iii of Dr. Grosart's edition of *The Complete Works of Samuel Daniel*, 5 vols., 1883-96. Prefixed to them is a short and informal *Note* by Professor Saintsbury *On the position of Daniel's Tragedies in English Literature*. See also the *Memorial-Introduction* (*II. Critical*) in vol. iv of the same edition.

[3] Cf. *ante*, vol. i. pp. 181 *seqq.* See also *ib.*, p. 304, as to Kyd's *Cornelia*.

piece to her *Tragedie of Antonie* (printed in 1595, but written five years earlier; the latter, however, was nothing but a translation[1]). Daniel's tragedy takes its start from the death of Antony; and the imagination is touched by the grandiose isolation of the opening situation, where the Queen is discovered alone in the Monument, face to face with her destiny. Her soliloquy occupies the first act, and at this rate of progress the tragedy proceeds, till its catastrophe has been related by a *Nuntius* at its close. Choruses follow each act; and all the rules of classic tragedy are scrupulously preserved. But in the place of the rhetorical point and persuasiveness of the Latin tragic poet we have here a Pegasus ambling tamely through an endless succession of quatrains[2]; no epic power seems recognisable in any of the narrative portions of the poem; and the short metre of the choral lyrics, except perhaps in the concluding strain, remains equally ineffective.

Philotas (*pr.* 1605).

A rather superior intrinsic interest belongs to the tragedy of *Philotas*, begun by Daniel in 1600 with a view to a private representation, but not completed and published till 1605, and re-issued in *Certaine Smalle Works* with *Cleopatra* and the admired *Complaynt of Rosamond* in the same and subsequent years. The edition of 1607 was accompanied by an *Apology*, designed to ward off the charge, which he had been called upon to meet before the Lords of the Council, that the action of the play was intended to be applied to the history of Essex's plot[3]. Inasmuch as this defence must be accepted, the tragedy has to stand upon its merits. It is an extremely long-winded, but not wholly ineffective version of the story of Alexander and Philotas, as narrated by Quintus Curtius, Justin, and Plutarch. The exposition, which commences with the reading by Philotas of his father Parmenio's significant letter,

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[1] Cf. *ante*, p. 187. Samuel Brander's *Virtuous Octavia*, written in the same kind of style, appeared in 1598.

[2] The future apologist of rime shows himself in this play very far from perfect in its use. This specimen (act iii. sc. 1) may suffice:

> 'Love! alas no, it was th' innated hatred
> That thou and thine hast ever borne our people:
> That made thee seek all meanes to have us scattred,
> To disunite our strength, and make us feeble.'

[3] See the letter from Daniel to the Earl of Devonshire (Mountjoy) in *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, James I*, 1603–1610, p. 18; where the writer expresses his regret that he had offered to the Council to plead that he had read part of the tragedy to Mountjoy (before the time of the plot). It is in this letter that he avows himself assured of living *inter historiam temporis*.—In the *Apology* Daniel mentions that his friend Richard Latewar, who was chaplain to Mountjoy and a scholar of repute, had written a play

> 'Make thy selfe lesse Philotas then thou art,'

is well-devised, and in the last act the narrative by the *Nuntius* of the utter breakdown under torture of the hero's stubborn pride has a certain psychological interest [1]. The didactic meditations of the *Chorus*, too, are rendered more or less impressive by the solemn simplicity of the diction, which already reveals a master of English style [2]; and a sable cloud, appropriate to the tragic irony of the story, seems to settle over its course. But the lengthiness of the dialogue is prohibitory of all dramatic movement in this tragedy; lethargy seems to have been prescribed as its first law; and although it is the work of a poet, it proves him to have been one who lacked the dramatic power which is independent of any school or style.

His pastoral dramas.

Daniel left a more enduring mark upon the growth of a secondary branch of our dramatic literature. The limpid purity which characterises his lyrical verse, and which has a counterpart in the clear simplicity of his prose, is the most

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on the same argument, which as he afterwards heard was performed worthily and with great applause at St. John's College, Oxford, of which Latewar was a fellow.

[1] 'I never thought,' observes Alexander,

> 'a man that had a minde
> T' attempt so much, had had a heart so weake.'

In the earlier scenes Philotas sarcastically refers to Alexander as 'the young man.'

[2] See especially the *Chorus* at the end of act ii:

> 'How dost thou weare and weary at thy days,
> Restlesse ambition, never at an end,' &c.

The tragedy ends with the utterance of a hope full of fear, that 'this Hydra of ambition' may have no further heads to spring up in its stead and assault the throne with fresh treacheries:

> 'The which may teach us to observe this straine,
> T' admire high hills, but live within the plaine.'—

The 'Hydra of confusion' is similarly introduced into a passage of *The Queen's Arcadia*, act iv. sc. 5.

noteworthy quality of style in his two 'pastoral tragicomedies.' The earlier of these, *The Queene's Arcadia*, was presented in 1605 at Christ Church, Oxford, before Queen Anne, to whom it was dedicated when printed in the following year. This pastoral drama is pleasing in form ; rime is used in free arrangement, whereas the tragedies restrict themselves to a regular succession of quatrains ; and the diction is clear and unaffected. Moreover, this pastoral play has an action not devoid of interest, treating of the mischief wrought in Arcadia by false, or perverted, civilisation. Its representatives are Techne and Colax, who are the evil geniuses of the play, something as Lady Sneerwell and Snake are of Sheridan's comedy, but take a more active share in the conduct of the plot. Subsidiary agents of corruption are introduced in the persons of Alcon, a physician, and Lincus, a lawyer, intent upon securing patients and clients by creating the demand which they profess to supply[1], and (towards the close of the piece) of a religious charlatan called Pistophoenax[2]. If King James witnessed this tragicomedy, it was not by chance that allusion was made in it to a most noxious novelty introduced for the purpose of undermining the happiness of a primitive people[3]; but apart

The Queen's Arcadia (*pr.* 1650).

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[1] These characters are sketched with distinctness but without grossness. Lincus is of opinion that the Arcadians, 'being in the world, should be of the world'—or what is a lawyer to do ? Alcon trusts to the fact that he has come from far—for who now, he says, succeeds in the medical profession 'in foreign lands' except the Arabian or the Jew ?

[2] There is no internal evidence as to the particular kind of religious quack Daniel had in view ; but he makes a good point in asserting that the unsettlement of religious faith is the beginning of social disorder :

'For our profession anything refutes,
And all's unsettled whereas faith disputes.'

[3] 'a certain Herb wrapt up in Rolls
From th' island of *Nicosia*, where it grows :
Infus'd I think in some pestiferous Juice,
(Produc'd in that contagious burning Clime,
Contrarious to our Nature, and our Spirits)
Or else steep'd in the fuming Sop itself
Doth yield, t' enforce th' infecting Power thereof,
And this in Powder made, and fir'd, he sucks
Out of a little hollow Instrument
Of calcinated Clay, the Smoke thereof:
Which either he conveys out of his Nose
Or down into his Stomach with a Whiff.'

'Our holly hearbe nicotion' was perhaps first noticed on the stage in Lyly's from this particular charge, it must be allowed that the conception of a demoralised Arcadia faithfully enough reflected the society to which he held up the mirror[1]. More poetic in tone, and exhibiting some genuine pathos in the working out of its plot, which bears a general resemblance to the story of Viola in *Twelfth Night*, is Daniel's second pastoral drama, called *Hymen's Triumph*. It was performed before the Queen on the occasion of the marriage of Lord Roxburgh in February, 1614, and printed in the following year. This charming poem, though to some of the Arcadians of the day it seemed 'solemn and dull[2]', has by later critics, and by Coleridge in particular, been extolled as adorned by some of Daniel's most distinctive graces of diction, viz. a purity and manliness to be found in hardly any other Elisabethan writer, and an exquisite simplicity marking this style as the common ground of both prose and verse[3]. It was hardly to be expected that the high literary merits of this play should commend it to the approval of Queen Anne's courtiers; but some of the situations are in themselves effective[4].

Hymen's Triumph (*acted* 1614, *pr.* 1615).

In addition to these tragi-comedies, Daniel produced two masques for performance at Court—'things,' as he modestly writes, 'wherein the only life consists in shew,' and the writer's is 'the least part and of least note at the time of the performance thereof[5].' *The Vision of the Twelve*

Woman in the Moon (act iii. sc. 1); but no dramatist is worth quoting on the subject by the side of Ben Jonson. Shakspere, by the bye, never mentions tobacco; a circumstance deserving to be weighed by persons who consider his works to be due to the inspiration of Sir Walter Ralegh.

[1] The prefatory *Epistle* pleasingly accounts for the form chosen by the author for his moral lesson.

[2] It is so described by Chamberlain writing to Sir Dudley Carleton on February 10th.—As to the production cf. Nichols' *Progresses, &c. of James I*, vol. ii. p. 749.

[3] See the quotations from Coleridge in Dr. Grosart's *Memorial-Introduction, u. s.*, pp. xx–xxi.

[4] See especially act i. sc. 2, act ii. sc. 4, and act iv. sc. 3, where the rules of classic tragedy are frankly disregarded and the jealous Montanus stabs Clorindo-Silvia in the presence of her lover Thirsis, to whom she has just 'told her grief.'

[5] See *The Preface to the Reader* prefixed to *Tethys' Festival*. In the text he observes that he proposes to describe the scenic and mechanic arrange-

Goddesses was presented at Hampton Court early in 1604, and printed in the same year[1]; *Tethys' Festival or The Queene's Wake* was performed at Whitehall in June 1610, on the occasion of Prince Henry (to whom Jonson had dedicated his tragedy of *Philotas*) being created Prince of Wales; Queen Anne herself assuming the part of Tethys, and thirteen of her ladies representing so many ladies of English and Welsh rivers[2].

Sir William Alexander, Earl of Stirling (1580–1640).

Even more foreign to the atmosphere of the popular stage are the dramatic works of SIR WILLIAM ALEXANDER, afterwards Viscount, and then EARL OF STIRLING, or Sterline (to omit his further titles) (1580–1640). The unpopularity which Stirling in the latter part of his life, when he held the seals as Secretary of State for Scotland, and gave more thought to the interests of the country than to the prevailing religious sentiments of its population, has been very inadequately compensated by his literary reputation[3]. Here, however, we must leave aside all the Sonnets, Elegies, and Madrigals which his youthful pen dedicated to *Aurora*, and all the twelve hours of *Doomes-day*, the most solid literary product of his riper age; still less are we called upon to enquire into his share of responsibility for his royal master's version of the *Psalmes of King David*, of which he was granted a patent and by which he materially added to

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ments in the language of the architect (Inigo Jones) who 'speakes in his own mestier' to the *conoscenti*.

[1] Cf. Nichols, *u. s.*, vol. i. p. 305. This masque has been reprinted in an edition by Mr. E. Law (1880).

[2] See Grosart's edition, pp. 309–10; and cf. Nichols, *u. s.*, vol. ii. p. 346.

[3] Professor Masson in his *Drummond of Hawthornden*, p. 329, wrote of Stirling that he is 'vaguely remembered as the second-rate Scottish sycophant of an inglorious despotism and the author of a large quantity of fluent and stately English verse which no one reads.' His *Poetical Works* have however since been published in 3 vols. (Glasgow, 1870) with a *Memoir* in which the popular charge that he was bribed by the King to surrender his rights to the jurisdiction over a considerable part of North America is shown to be a perversion of facts; and in vol. i of *The Dictionary of National Biography* (1885) Dr. Grosart has condensed the information diffused by the late Dr. Charles Rogers through two volumes of *Memorials of the Earl of Stirling and the House of Alexander* (1877).—See also for a critical study of Stirling H. Beumelburg, *Sir William Alexander, Graf von Stirling, als dramatischer Dichter* (Halle, 1880).

his unpopularity. His *Paraenesis to Prince Henry* (1604), on the other hand, in so far associates itself with his dramatic works, as there is to be found in it the same vein of grave sententiousness as his tragedies, and a manly outspokenness which savours but little of the courtier. The *Elegie* with which he had too soon (1612) to follow it up is less worthy of his Muse.

His 'Monarchic Tragedies' (*pr.* 1603–1607).

Of the *Monarchicke Tragedies* themselves the earliest, *Darius*, was published by Alexander in 1603, shortly before he followed the fortunes of his sovereign across the Border. In 1604 this tragedy and *Croesus* were jointly published under the same title as that which in 1607 covered the whole of his compositions as a tragic poet—viz. in addition to the above *The Alexandraean Tragedy* (first printed in 1605) and *Julius Caesar*. These four tragedies, written within a few years, at a time when their author was only beginning to come into contact with Englishmen of letters or with the English stage [1], so closely resemble one another in every point of style, that it is quite unnecessary to speak of them separately. Moreover, the first two and the last of them (in order of production) together form a kind of trilogy. *Darius*, *Croesus*, and *Julius Caesar* are perhaps surpassed by *The Alexandraean Tragedy* (printed 1605), which its author may well term 'polytragicke,' in amplitude of design as well as in the elaborate treatment of several of the lyrical passages; but the literary features of all these works are identical; and their theme is the same—the fall of ambition. They treat their particular subjects—the ruin of Darius Codomannus, the overthrow of Croesus, the contentions of the Diadochi down to the murder of the royal family of Macedon, and the death of Caesar—in dramatic form indeed, but with the breadth and discursiveness of epical narrative. The traditions of the ancient Greek drama are closely followed; and we have expository prologues (spoken by Darius, Solon, the Ghost of Alexander, and

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[1] At some time he became acquainted with Alleyn, whom in a poem reprinted in vol. iii of the *Poetical Works* from Collier's *Memoirs of Alleyn*, he extols for his munificence as the founder of Dulwich College, stating that 'at the height of that which he profess'd' he far surpassed all the ancients and moderns alike.

Juno, in the four tragedies respectively), dialogues mainly composed of long speeches, broken by occasional stichomythia, and a Chorus interposing reflexions in a lyrical form at the several stages of the action. The deaths are narrated by messengers or other persons[1], that of Darius twice over, that of Caesar after the debate ensuing in the Senate upon his assassination has already been held. The chief literary beauties of these plays consist in their lyrical passages, which however are unequal in excellence, and weary by the sameness of their themes[2]. The cadence of the quatrains which build up the dialogue is frequently pleasing, and its turns are often felicitous ; but the general effect remains that of a volume of speech extremely prolix[3], and marred by affectations of style[4] as well as by defects of construction and by occasional lapses into baldness of expression. The aid of antithesis and of alliteration is frequently called in, without any signal advantage being gained in the way of variety of effect. Elevated in tone, and often vigorous as well as dignified in sentiment, and manifesting the operation of an observing mind together with the influence of a carefully trained taste, these tragedies retain no interest for anybody but the literary student, whom alone they can be supposed to have been originally intended to please[5].

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[1] In *Croesus* however (act iv. sc. 1) Adrastus wounds himself on the stage with a direct view to 'the Stygian coast.'

[2] Among the finer of the Choruses may be cited those following act ii of *Darius*, act iii of *Croesus*, and (more especially) that after act iii of *The Alexandraean Tragedy*. In the Chorus closing act iii. of *Julius Caesar* may be noticed the partial attempt to substitute repetition for consonance in the rimes (*receive—conceive ; intent—content ; repell—compell ; acquir'd—requir'd, &c.*). Daniel, in his dialogue at all events, occasionally resorts to the same practice.

[3] The opening soliloquies might be regarded as especially trying, but that they serve the purpose of exposition. The ghost of Alexander, however, is surely the most loquacious of all the unquiet spirits who have ever walked the modern stage.

[4] Conceits are frequent, like that of Caesar deprecating his having seemed 'uncivil in the civil wars,' or of Brutus declaring 'his soil' to be dearer to him than 'his soul.' Even puns occasionally occur.

[5] No parallelisms have been brought forward between Shakspere's and Stirling's plays on the subject of *Julius Caesar* of a nature to establish any connexion between them, except in so far as both authors drew from the same source. Malone traced a resemblance to some famous lines in *The*

Barnaby Barnes' The Devil's Charter (*pr.* 1607).

I hardly know whether this may seem an appropriate place in which to notice a singular dramatic production, which though distinctly written under the influence of a masterpiece of popular Elisabethan tragedy, neither in its origin nor in its destination connects itself with the popular stage. Its author, Barnaby Barnes[1], was a son of Dr. Richard Barnes, the second Protestant Bishop of Durham, and himself an Oxonian by training, although he never seems to have taken a degree. In the controversy between Gabriel Harvey and Nashe, he took the side of the former, and exposed himself in consequence to a series of personal attacks, to which were added satirical reflexions or allusions by Marston and others. Barnaby Barnes, however, whose *Parthenophil and Parthenophe*, a collection of 'Sonnets, Madrigals, Elegies and Odes' was published in 1593, was a lyrical poet gifted with real imaginative ardour, and a flow of fancy that, though running within well-known banks and disporting itself in familiar undulations, exhibits a spirit raised above the pedantry of either form or thought[2]. These poems must have been the products of his youth[3];

Tempest ('The cloud-capp'd towers,' &c.) in a passage of *Darius* (act iv. sc. 3; removed in the edition of 1637); but the similarity, though certainly striking, must be the result of accident. See Craik's *The English of Shakespeare*, p. 46; and cf. *ante*, p. 200. Another passage occurs in the same play (final *Chorus*) which might be thought to have been suggested by one in *Henry IV*; but any suspicion of plagiarism would here be equally futile.—Stirling must have been a good scholar after his kind; but he has odd notions of quantity (Darĭus, Eumēnes, Nicănor).—Stirling was probably influenced by the successors of Jodelle as well as by Jodelle himself; I find mention of a *Darius* by the brothers La Taille, and of a *Mort de César* by J. Grévin, both of which might easily have reached Scotland.

[1] See Mr. Bullen's account of him in vol. iii of *The Dictionary of National Biography* (1885).

[2] These poems have been rendered generally accessible by the reprint in vol. v of Professor Arber's plenteous *English Garner* (1882). Barnes appears to emancipate himself successfully from the obscurity of treatment noticeable in the earlier poems; and his form seems to grow lighter together with his treatment. The Madrigals interspersed among the Sonnets, though leaving something to be desired, help to buoy up the progress of the series; but the Elegies also have much beauty.—Barnes' free and effective use of feminine endings may be deserving of notice.

[3] See *Sonnet xxxiii*: 'For now mine age have thrice seven winters run.'—Dedicatory sonnets are addressed by him to Essex, Southampton, the Countess of Pembroke, and others.

his dramatic efforts on the other hand belong to his later years; for he died in 1609. His only extant play is *The Divil's Charter, a Tragedie containing the Life and Death of Pope Alexander the Sixt*, which was performed before King James I at Christmas 1606–7, and in October 1607, and was printed in the same year. To King James it no doubt commended itself alike as a seasonable comment on the pretensions of the Papacy, and because of the illustrations furnished by it of the Black Art as worked at head-quarters. But to the student of dramatic literature the play is chiefly of interest as showing the long-lived influence of one of the most powerful productions of the popular Elisabethan stage—Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*. While the immediate source of Barnaby Barnes' strange tragedy was the elaborate commentary on the German *Faustbuch* published in 1599 by the Lutheran Widmann, the important scene of the signing of the fatal contract is manifestly copied from the corresponding passage in Marlowe's play, of which that of Barnes contains further reminiscences[1]. He was also the author of a play, never printed, called *The Battle of Hexham* (or Evesham?); and possibly of a comedy, *The Madcap*[2].

Masques and cognate entertainments of this period.

The preceding pages have repeatedly brought out the well-known fact that the popular stage was very far from absorbing the activity of our dramatists at any time in the reign of Queen Elisabeth. During its closing as well as in its earlier years not only were plays of divers sorts performed in the royal palaces and in the houses of the great nobility, at the Inns of Court and in the Colleges of the two Universities, but entertainments, which though not properly speaking dramas, contained in them more or less of a dramatic element, were here and elsewhere assiduously presented on every variety of occasion. The masque was a species capable of a systematic literary developement, such as indeed still awaits a freer imaginative use than has been applied to in the course of many succeeding generations. Of the City Pageants, on the other hand, the form, as befitted their intended range of influence, had become more or less stereotyped. While this latter class of entertainments may therefore as a whole be left aside with regard to the period more immediately under review, it may be worth while to notice the increasing attention paid to the former by writers of literary pretensions or ambition in the declining years of Elisabeth. The day had passed when the Queen's wrath could be provoked by brutal attempts to reflect the policy of her government by dramatic reflexions of such of its proceedings as seemed to call for popular applause[1]. In the later years of her reign, we may compare with the account—from a Cambridge pen—of the entertainments presented to the Queen at Oxford in 1592[2], the record of the festive exertions made in 1594 by the members of Gray's Inn, after a long abstinence from such amusements[3]. Francis Bacon, who contributed to these revels the addresses of the six councillors to the 'Prince of Purpoole[4],' was an adept in the devising of 'masques and triumphs,' and as his essay on the subject shows, had brought his powers of observation to bear upon the various accessories on which the pleasure derived from such 'toys' so largely depends. To the year 1592 or 1593 are probably to be ascribed certain speeches composed by him for the purposes of some festive occasion at court,—very possibly for a device presented on the Queen's day by the Earl of Essex. They are best known under the title of *A Con-*

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[1] See sc. v. My knowledge of *The Devil's Charter* is derived from the full account by Dr. Herford, *u. s.*, pp. 197–202, and the late Dr. W. Wagner's Introduction to his edition of *Dr. Faustus* (1878).

[2] See Fleay, *u. s.*, vol. i. p. 30.

Compositions of this description by Bacon (1593-5).

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[1] See the account of some sort of burlesque on the imprisonment of the Popish bishops (which introduced the figure of Bonner carrying a lamb in his hands and eating it as he walked along, followed by a dog with the Host in his mouth), which was presented to the Queen by the Cambridge wits in August, 1564, and which ended in her departing abruptly with 'strong language,' followed by 'the man who held the torches'—and 'so ended the thoughtless and scandalous representation.' *De Silva to the Duke of Parma, Spanish State Papers,* vol. i (1892), p. 375.

[2] See Nichols' *Progresses of Queen Elizabeth,* vol. iii. p. 149.

[3] The so-called *Gesta Grayorum,* printed in 1688. (Cf. *ante,* p. 27, *note,* and see Nichols, *u. s.,* p. 262. As to the title see Warton, vol. i. p. 239.)

[4] See Spedding's *Works of Bacon,* vol. viii. pp. 235 *seqq.*

ference of Pleasure[1]. In 1595 he (as there seems no reason for doubting) drew up the speeches for the device exhibited by the favourite before the Queen, whose confidence in his patron Bacon was at that time using every effort to strengthen[2]. The dark shadow that fell on the aged Queen's last years left her love of amusement unchanged; it is curious to observe how, in a period of our stage history in the course of which several masterpieces of our drama were performed in her presence, she was at times contented with interludes and moral-plays of an antiquated type[3]; while her progresses from great house to great house continued almost to the end. Only a few months intervened between her celebrated visit to Harefield House[4] and the pageant of her own funeral.

Continued prevalence of the drama over the masque.

On the whole, the extraordinary growth of the popular drama, and the exuberant energy with which the dramatists at large exercised their powers of invention both as to choice and as to treatment of subjects, seems to have retarded rather than hastened the developement of the masque and of similar kinds of entertainments in the later years of Queen Elisabeth. In the new reign, largely of course under the influence of wholly new conditions of Court life and sentiment, the poetry of the masque was to take higher and wider flights, and to vindicate to itself a recognised place in English literature. But under

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[1] See *A Conference of Pleasure, containing the Praise of Fortitude, the Praise of Love, the Praise of Knowledge, the Praise of the Queen*, printed by Spedding in 1870, with an *Introduction* pointing out the nature of the evidence as to the design of the work.

[2] Cf. Spedding's *Works of Bacon*, vol. viii. pp. 374–86, where the text, being taken from another MS., slightly differs from that given by Nichols, *u. s.*, p. 371. The device, which was presented by the Queen on the anniversary of her accession, contains the character of '*a hollow statesman*'—the personal intention of which remains unknown. Spedding observes that 'though there can be no reasonable doubt that these speeches were written by Bacon, it is he believes by mere accident that they pass as his.' As to the question of the authorship of the *Device of an Indian Prince*, which has been attributed to Bacon, see the same volume of Spedding's edition, pp. 386 *seqq.*

[3] See Fleay's *Chronicle History of the London Stage*, pp. 121 *seqq.*: Court Performances (1594–1603).

[4] For the entertainments on the occasion see Nichols, *u. s.*, vol. iii. p. 586.

Elisabeth, although the drama not unfrequently introduced a masque into the machinery of its plot, and although the regular drama and this irregular species occasionally intermixed[1], the progress of the masque as a literary and dramatic species was slow, in comparison to that to which in the hands of Ben Jonson and others it attained in the first and second Stuart reigns. Wherever the taedium was periodically felt that waits upon poetical and rhetorical addresses in monologue or dialogue, spoken in cap and gown, or by allegorical personages clad in significant apparel, there the drama proper was still hailed, and hailed more eagerly than ever, both for its own sake and as capable of providing pleasure together with matter to feed on, as well as of alleviating that burden of ceremonial which at times becomes peculiarly unbearable in its permanent scenes.

The Academical Drama.

This experience is observable, both at the Inns of Court and at the Universities. In the former, as has been seen, the regular drama had long met with an occasional welcome, and great dramatic memories cling to some at least of the noble Halls of the great English seminaries of the law. At Oxford and Cambridge, whither the interests, and even the follies, occupying the outside world found their way quite easily in the Elisabethan and Jacobean period[2], a steady though not so far as we know a copious stream of both Latin and English plays flowed from the early part of Elisabeth's reign down to the outbreak of the Civil War. Thomas Heywood in his *Apology for Actors* speaks of himself as having in the time of his residence at Cambridge, i.e. about the beginning of the last decade of the sixteenth century, 'seen Tragedyes, Comedyes, historyes, pastorals and shewes publicly acted, in which the Graduates of good place and reputation' were 'specially parted[3].' To be sure, he likewise adds that 'there were some, though not of the gravest and most ancient doctors of the Academy,' who censured these performances. As for the Latin plays, they had the time-honoured sanction of high academical authority, which in the Reformation age had established them as a recognised part of College life[1]. The English plays were looked upon much more doubtfully, because the popular and the College stage here came into very close contact. Repeated efforts were made, on various pretexts, to exclude 'common players[2].' But stage-performances by members of the University themselves at times likewise required supervision. In 1592 indeed, as has been already noticed[3], Dr. Still, the author of *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, had as Vice-Chancellor excused the University of Cambridge from the preparation of an English play for the diversion of the Queen, on the ground that no such play was at hand; but, for one reason or another, the dramatic fever rose at Cambridge in the ensuing years, and

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[1] Cf. *ante*, pp. 387 *seqq.*, as to the gradual growth of the masque.—For an example of the intermixture, or rather juxtaposition of drama and masque, cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 311, as to *The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune*, attributed by Mr. Fleay to Kyd.

[2] Anthony Wood dates the advance of luxury at Oxford from the visit of King James I in 1605. See Dr. Brodrick's short *History of the University of Oxford* (1886), p. 102.

[3] See *Apology*, *&c.*, p. 28. For lists of English and Latin University

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plays, performed in the period from 1559 to 1642, see the Appendix to Fleay's *Chronicle History of the London Stage*, pp. 419–21. See also for a list of Cambridge plays C. Wordsworth, *Social Life in the Universities in the Eighteenth Century* (1874), pp. 188 *seqq.*; and for a list of Oxford plays Miss M. Lee's *Introduction* to *Narcissus*, pp. xiii *seqq.*

[1] A Statute of Queens' College, Cambridge, of the year 1546, directed that any student refusing to take part in the acting of a comedy or tragedy in the College should be expelled from it. See Mr. J. Bass Mullinger's *The University of Cambridge*, 1535–1625 (1884), p. 73, where he also refers to a Trinity statute of 1560 mentioned by Mr. C. Wordsworth.—At Oxford, as late as 1592, an amusing instance occurs of a Disputation, which, together with a Greek Oration, had been offered to the Queen as an entertainment on her visit, being cut short, while during the same visit two Latin comedies were enacted on successive evenings. These were the *Bellum Grammaticale, sive Nominum Verborumque Discordia Civilis*, and William Wager's *Rivales*, which had been previously produced in 1583.

[2] In 1580, according to Mr. Wordsworth, the Vice-Chancellor at Cambridge declined to accede to the recommendation by Lord Burghley and others, of the Earl of Oxford's players; according to *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, Mary and Elisabeth*, 1547–1580, p. 661, the Heads of Houses on this occasion urged that Lord Oxford's players should not be allowed to 'show their cunning' in certain plays already acted by them before the Queen, the same privilege being then denied to the players of the Earl of Leicester. The latter was High Steward of the University.—In 1592 certain players, who had been forbidden to act in the district, performed at Chesterton, and ventured to post their bills on the College gates.

[3] *Ante*, vol. i. p. 261.

in 1597, when a Latin play (still extant) by D. Wiburne, entitled *Machiavellus*, was produced at St. John's, 'a merry (but abusive) comedy' in English, called *Club-Law*, was performed at Clare Hall, in the presence of the mayor of the town and a number of the townsfolk, against whose 'privacies' and persons the satire of the comedy was directed[1]. Its author was George Ruggle, who was afterwards to attain to celebrity as the author of a similar production in Latin[2]. Still greater licence was probably indulged in by the Cambridge undergraduates, when they resorted for the performance of plays to the courtyards of the inns of the town, surrounded by galleries constructed after the fashion of the early days of the drama in London[3]. Finally, in the second year of James I's reign, a royal letter was issued forbidding among other 'unprofitable or idle games and plays,' the performance within five miles of the University town of Cambridge of any 'common plays, publick shews, interludes, comedies and tragedies in the English tongue[4].' But so far as occasional performances in College were concerned, the practice appears by no means to have been wholly suppressed. Dramatic composition was in fashion, and furnished congenial occupation to many who were either weary or afraid of theological controversy, or who had no liking for it[5]; and dramatic performances were perennially attractive, if only because of their requirement of costume, the delight of youth, and never more so than of English youth in the luxurious early years of the seventeenth century[6].

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[1] See Fuller's account, cited by Mr. Mullinger, *u. s.*, pp. 430-1.

[2] See below as to *Ignoramus*.—Neither *Club-Law* nor another comedy by Ruggle, entitled *Re vera, or Verily*, is extant.

[3] Mr. Mullinger, *u. s.*, p. 431, mentions the case of a B.A. of Corpus, named Pepper, who in 1600 was deprived of his degree for having taken part, unseemingly attired, in an interlude at the Black Boar.

[4] Mullinger, *u. s.*, p. 429.

[5] *Ib.*, p. 522.—Thus, Henry Wotton during his Oxford career composed a play called *Tancredo* for 'the private use' of the members of Queen's College, whither he had migrated from New College about the year 1586. Unfortunately the play, which is not known to have been acted, is lost.

[6] Birch's *Letters* include one written by Sir Dudley Carleton from the Hague in February, 1617, where, describing the performance at Leyden of a play taken from Seneca, he says of the actors that 'to give them their due,

An exceptional significance or interest, as has been seen, attaches on more than one occasion in the history of the dramatic literature of Elisabeth's reign to the production of a University play; and from its concluding period there has come down to us a tripartite dramatic work of academical origin, whose theme and treatment seem alike to entitle it to more than a passing word of notice.

The Parnassus Plays: The Pilgrimage to Parnassus (*acted* 1598–9): *The Return from Parnassus, Part I* (*acted* 1601–2) *and Part II* (*acted* 1602–3 *and pr.* 1606).

The Parnassus Plays, to adopt a convenient title for this of its kind unique trilogy, consist of *The Pilgrimage to Pernassus* and *The Returne from Pernassus*, the latter in *Two Parts*, of which the *Second* was twice printed in 1606, with the sub-title of *The Scourge of Simony.* They were all performed as Christmas or New Year's entertainments at St. John's College, Cambridge. As to their dates, I must content myself with indicating in a note the reasons which have led me, after much consideration, to the conclusion that *The Pilgrimage* was performed at Christmas-tide 1598–9, and the *First* and *Second Parts* of *The Return* at the same season of 1601–2 and 1602–3 respectively. Manifestly, all the three plays were by the same hand; whose hand this was, must I think be still considered an open question[1].

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if their outsides for their dressing apparel (most of the parts being women) had been answerable to their pronunciation and action, *they might compare with our universities*.'

[1] *Part II* of *The Return* cannot have been performed before Christmas-tide 1600–1 (for *Belvedere or The Garden of the Muses*, attacked in act i. sc. 2, was not entered on the Stationers' Registers till August 1600), or after 1602–3 (inasmuch as the Queen, who is repeatedly referred to in the play as reigning, died March 24, 1603). So far I follow Professor Arber; but when he argues that the reference to the double Dominical letter (act iii. sc. 1) points to 1601–2, it becomes necessary to weigh against this the explicit statement (in the Prologue) that the general subject of the three plays has been under treatment 'some four years.' The date 1601–2 for *Part II* of *The Return* would thus take us back to 1597–8 for *The Pilgrimage*. But Dr. Hales has shown that in *The Pilgrimage* (act ii) are mentioned 'Kinsader's' (Marston's) *Satires*, Bastard's *Epigrams*, and (though this may not be conclusive) Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, all of which were first published in 1598. We therefore are obliged to prefer 1598–9 for the date of *The Pilgrimage*, and consequently 1602–3 for that of *Part II* of *The Return*. But as in the Prologue to *Part I* of *The Return* Consiliodorus says that the departure of the pilgrims took place seven years since, and as they arrived at Parnassus hill 1598–9, *Part I* of *The Return* must have been performed

The Pilgrimage to Parnassus.

The first of these three plays, which was probably written without any intention of a continuation, announces in the *Prologue* that it was composed[1] in three days, and in its concluding lines humbly designates itself an 'extemporall show.' Its action is in truth slight enough, and recalls in its general course many a time-honoured allegorical fancy, of which the idea of a pilgrimage serves as the basis[2]. At the outset the aged Consiliodorus sends forth his son Philomusus and his nephew Studioso on their journey to Parnassus hill, bidding them take their share of what is better than wealth and place, and deserves to be

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three years afterwards, i. e. in 1601–2. (See the arguments of Professors Arber and Hales, and of Mr. Fleay, with the last-named of whom I concur.)

The three plays have been edited by Mr. W. D. Macray (Oxford, 1886), who discovered the first two of them in one of Hearne's volumes of Miscellaneous Collections in the Bodleian. *Part II* of *The Return* had been frequently reprinted; so by Hawkins in his *Origin of the English Drama*, in vol. i of the *Ancient British Drama*, and in vol. ix of Hazlitt's *Dodsley*. Professor Arber's reprint of this play, forming No. 6 of the *English Scholar's Library* (1879), is accompanied by a valuable Introduction on the bibliography and the date of the play. See also Mullinger, *u. s.*, pp. 522 *seqq.*—On the publication of Mr. Macray's edition of the three plays, Professor J. Hales published two admirable articles in *The Academy*, March 19, and in *Macmillan's Magazine* for May, 1887. My account of the plays is partly taken from a lecture delivered by me about the same time, and reprinted in *The Owens College Magazine* for July. See also Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. ii. pp. 347 *seqq.* The enquiries of Messrs. Bullen and Gollancz as to the authorship of the plays will be separately noticed.

[1] Unless the 'three daies' studie' refers to the learning and rehearsing of the parts.

[2] Dr. John Brown, in his admirable *John Bunyan* (3rd edition, 1887, pp. 286 *seqq.*), gives a long list of sixteenth and seventeenth century 'treatises or books of pious meditation under titles suggestive of an allegorical journey'; and traces the general notice back to Guillaume de Guilevile's *Le Pèlerinage de l'Homme* (1330 *c.*), which was suggested to the author by the *Roman de la Rose*, and of which an English version, *The Pilgrimage of the Sowle*, was printed by Caxton.—The *Peregrinatio Scholastica* of John Day, of which some account was purposely given above (pp. 592–3), and which was in all probability written several years after the production of *The Pilgrimage to Parnassus*, treats a similar, but not an identical, allegory—its theme being the progress of Learning to a settlement in life.—On the other hand Cervantes' *Viage del Parnaso*, which was first printed in 1614 or 1615. has a different kind of theme—a summons from Apollo to all good people to help him in clearing Parnassus of bad poets. (See Ticknor, vol. ii. p. 123; and cf. *Cervantes* in Mérimée's *Portraits historiques et littéraires.*)—I know nothing concerning Trajano Boccalini's *Bagguagli di Parnaso*, with a Second Part, *La Segretaria d' Apollo*. Boccalini died in 1613.

prized for its own sake rather than for that of advantages which are quite as likely as not to fail to follow it. This is the keynote of his counsel, and of the spirit of the play[1]; the rest of his advice, though not given without some misgivings, is neither timorous nor ignoble. So the youths set forth on their pilgrimage, which leads them along the route of the *Trivium*—through Logic land, where their first tempter meets them in the shape of Madido, a votary of the wine-cup, who holds that 'there is no Parnassus but the third loft in a wine tavern,' and who with a quart of burnt sack to help him will make you a better poem than all the newest publications of 'Kinsader,' Lodge, and the rest of them. In the land of Rhetoric, where the birds are singing in the morning air, with Cicero as the nightingale of the grove, they are disheartened by meeting Stupido, who has turned aside from vain learning to the Marprelate tracts and catechisms of Geneva print, and are lured to self-indulgence by Amoretto, a pupil of Ovid and a prophet of wantonness. With the last act they have arrived in the region of Philosophy, one of the friends, as they come forth from Amoretto's silken toils[2], replying very nobly to the other's disparagement of Poetry. They have not sojourned long among the harsher surroundings of Philosophy, when they are confronted by Ingenioso, a student who has turned his back on Parnassus, burnt his books and made up his mind that scholarship spells bankruptcy. Such counsels of despondency, plausibly decked out in the garb of common sense, are too often among the trials of the young student—and at times it is just when the goal may be near that the thought 'and what is it all worth?' is most difficult to repress[1]. But the two companions shake off the evil adviser; for the mountain is at hand. Four years (the ordinary period of a degree course) have passed since they began their pilgrimage; and now the sacred grove opens to them, and with laurelled brows they sit them down by the Muses' springs.

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[1] If I were younge, who nowe am waxen olde,
Whose yonts, you see, are dryde, benumd and coulde,
Though I foreknew that gold was to the boore,
I'd be a scholar, though I live but poore.'

He afterwards warns them, *inter alia*, against associating with

'Those amorettoes that doe spend theire time
In comminge of their smother-dangled heyre.'

[2] It is not too high a praise to assert that this passage recalls familiar lines in *Mother Hubbard's Tale* and in *Comus*.

The Return from Parnassus, Part I.

The Return from Parnassus—for the second of these plays, again, seems to have been written without any design of a third—was manifestly suggested by the success of *The Pilgrimage;* and as a sequel it had to turn the given situation to the best possible account. This could hardly be accomplished except by giving an ironical colouring to the later experiences of the pilgrims who had reached the Muses' hill; and what more ironical than the contrast between the privileges which the student toils so hard to compass and the estimate set upon them by the world? The years of student life are succeeded by the years of journeymanship[2]; but, whatever troubles may be apt to beset that condition, a want of variety is not usually included among them. Ingenioso—the cynical 'old hand' of the first piece—soon finds his way back into the company of the two friends, and constituting himself their mentor in the illiberal arts, begins with a lesson, enforced by example, in that of catching a patron. Another decadent, named Luxurio, helps to cheer them on their way from Parnassus to London town, where a subsequent scene exhibits the entire process of cheating mere tradesmen and tapsters. Philomusus and Studioso feel themselves constrained to begin life in the world as best they may. The former is discovered, in a black frieze coat, and in a 'sable' condition of mind, doing duty as a sexton under pressure from impatient sons and heirs; the latter has sunk to a yet lower depth, having accepted the position of a private tutor on distinctly menial terms[1].

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[1] As will be seen immediately, Mr. Fleay seeks to identify Ingenioso throughout these plays with Nashe. But, whether or not Nashe's adversaries are to be believed on the subject of his University career, nothing in it or in the writings of Nashe shows the contempt for learning which is the keynote of the cynical philosophy boasted by the Ingenioso of the *Pilgrimage*. The character is, I at the same time think, truthfully conceived, and need not conceal any personal intention at all.

[2] The *Wanderjahre:* 'Let us resolve to wander in the worlde,' says Philomusus.

Before the action runs to its close, a fresh source of laughter, and of satire appealing directly to the appreciation of a professedly critical public, is introduced in the person of Gallio—'nowe, gentlemen, youue may laughe if you will; for here comes a gull[2].' This fool of fashion and patron of poetry is satisfied that he can 'make the ladies happie' with 'the most ambrosial veyne' of verse in vogue; and he accordingly orders Ingenioso, who acts as indicator to his follies and represents the literary adept of the age, to supply him with something in the style of the author of *Venus and Adonis*. The other work of 'sweete Mr. Shakspeare' with which he exhibits familiarity is *Romeo and Juliet*[3]. In the end Ingenioso shakes off the intolerable burden of such a patron and resolves to become a corrector for the press—a curious glimpse into the more laborious back-streets of Bohemia. Luxurio, who has likewise reappeared to bid a final farewell to poetry, frankly retires with the set purpose of 'drinking out his eyes.' As for the two friends, Philomusus and Studioso, they resolve upon seeking yet another refuge, and selling themselves for the price at times paid for perversion. *Eheu*[4]!

The Return from Parnassus, Part II.

The Second Part of *The Return* merely continues the same argument, although with greater elaboration and with an added assurance of manner that proves the unusual success of the *First Part*. Once more we see the two disappointed pilgrims to Parnassus seeking to make a living in their native land by their wits; trying their fortune, first as a physician and his man, then as fiddlers in attendance upon a company of actors to whom they have hired out their services; and finally abandoning all further endeavours, and resolved to turn simple shepherds, spending their days in 'fearless merriment' among woods and rocks that may peradventure prove kinder than men. Once more, too, we meet with Ingenioso, who enters with a copy of Juvenal in his hand—the author whom he is ambitious to rival as a satirist. Nothing seems to me more probable than that by this time the author of the *Parnassus Plays* had come to mould the figure of his Ingenioso more and more upon the original of the wittiest and boldest of satirists, the 'Young Juvenal' we can hardly doubt of a fellow-dramatist's apologue[1], and a Johnian whose unlucky parting from his college[2] as well as his loyal tributes to its fame, was not likely to have been forgotten within its walls. After exerting himself in accordance with his gifts throughout the play, with the aid of two helpmates named Phantasma and Furor Poeticus, he too retires with his companions—his destined port being the Isle of Dogs, the true home of unrestrained satirical invective[3]. This special intention seems to me unmistakeable, although I cannot perceive any necessity for falling in with Mr. Fleay's view, that the *Parnassus Plays* forms one continuous personal satire. On the contrary, the general purpose of the trilogy quite sufficiently covers the action and characters of the several plays[4].

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[1] The conditions of the engagement are excellent; and so when in the course of a lesson in grammar the tutor ventures to maintain an opinion to the contrary, is Young Hopeful's menace: 'I saye it's a noune adjective, and if I feche my mother to you I'll make you confesse as much.'

[2] Act iii. sc. 1.

[3] See the passage, *ib.*, where the same charge of plagiarism is implied against Daniel, which is more formally repeated in *Part II*, act i. sc. 2.

[4] 'To Rome or Rhems I'le hye, led on by fate,
Where I will ende my dayes or mende my state.' (Act v. sc. 3.)

I need not dwell on the species of bye-plot which holds together the action of the last *Part*, and provides it with a second title. Simony *à la mode* is exemplified in bestowal of a living on an ignorant *non-University* man (Immerito), who has bribed the feather-headed son (Amoretto) of a country-gentleman of more acres than manners[5], while

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[1] Cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 420.

[2] *Ib.*, p. 419 and *note*. In act v. sc. 4, Ingenioso says:

> 'For had not Cambridge been to me unkind,
> I had not turned to gall my milky mind.'

There is a specially warm tribute to Nashe in the famous scene of act i.

[3] As to Nashe's own (non-extant) play of *The Isle of Dogs*, cf. *ib.*, p. 425.

[4] Furor Poeticus, whom Mr. Fleay identifies with Marston, is thought by Professor Sarrazin to be Marlowe. See his discussion of *The Parnassus Plays* in *Thomas Kyd und sein Kreis* (Berlin, 1892), where it is argued that the style Studioso resembles Kyd's.

[5] Amoretto, who has much in common with Gallio of *Part I*, has himself been an ornament of the College, where however he complains that the

Academico, 'a scurvy mere Cambridge scholar,' goes empty away[1]. A specially amusing personage is the patron's legal man of business, the Recorder who hates the forward wit of 'puny boys' at College, ready to start up 'and make a theme against common lawyers.' The effect of this character was of course heightened by its personal intention[2].

But the same play contains a series of personal criticisms of a quite different kind, which lend to it a singular interest, and have even in our own days subjected it to the resentment of an irritable piety[3]. Several of these criticisms[4], for the most part conveyed with much force and felicity of expression, have been already incidentally cited; and if University preferences and prejudices made it necessary to sneer at the 'Empyric' Jonson, and ignore the greater achievements of Shakspere[5], some amends are made to both in a subsequent scene of the play[6]. Here the two actors Burbadge and Kemp are introduced, as the instructors of the students in the art of acting; and Kemp, while criticising University playwrights as 'smelling too much of that writer Ovid, and that writer Metamorphosis,' gives it as his opinion that 'here's our fellow Shakespeare puts them all down, aye and

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mathematics spoilt his brain for verse-making; and he has taken entirely to field-sports, love-making, and modern languages.

[1] Academico previously expresses the desire of his heart in some execrable hexameters, on the last words of which Echo puns in approved fashion:

'Fain would I have a living, if I could tell how to come by it.
Echo. Buy it.'

[2] The individual satirised was Francis Brackyn, then Deputy-Recorder of the borough of Cambridge. He had taken the lead in certain proceedings which showed that the insult of *Club Law* still rankled in the minds of the townsmen, and was afterwards to suffer more severely as the hero of *Ignoramus*. Cf. Mullinger, *u. s.*, pp. 526 *seqq.*

[3] I confess myself at a loss to what other cause to attribute Mr. Swinburne's extraordinary outburst (in his essay on *John Day* in *The Nineteenth Century* for October, 1897) against what seems to him 'such reptile rancour as hisses and spits and pants with all the recreant malignity of a fangless viper, through the stagnant and fetid fenlands of *The Return from Parnassus*.'

[4] See act i. sc. 2. They refer to Daniel, Lodge, Drayton, Marston, Marlowe, Ben Jonson, Shakspere, and Nashe, besides Spenser, Constable, and one or two other poets unconnected with dramatic literature.

[5] He is praised only for his *Venus and Adonis* and *Rape of Lucrece*, and advised to choose graver subjects.—Yet in the same play (act iv. sc. 3) the opening couplet of *Richard III* is quoted.

[6] Act iv. sc. 3.

Ben Jonson too.' Thus, although the broken-down University scholars bitterly resent the prosperity of the successful play-actors[1], a sense of proportion is not wanting in the midst of partialities; and the criticism of contemporary popular dramatists in this purely academical production is on the whole far from discreditable to the literary insight of its author.

The authorship of the Parnassus Plays.

The attempt which has been made to bring home the authorship of this and the two remaining Parts of the trilogy, to John Day, a dramatist of whose writings we now possess sufficient materials for forming an opinion, seems deserving of special attention; and the courtesy of Mr. I. Gollancz enables me to indicate in a note what seems to him convincing evidence in its favour. It would however require a more complete proof to induce me to regard this ingenious conjecture as an established fact[2].

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[1] See especially Studioso's speech in act v. sc. 1.

[2] The conjecture that John Day may have been the author of *The Parnassus Plays* was first advanced by the late Mr. Bolton Corney in *Notes and Queries*, Series III, vol. ix. p. 387. His arguments, which of course had reference to *Part II* of *The Return from Parnassus* only, rested above all on the discovery of a copy of the 1606 quarto of this play, which though anonymous bore the MS. *envoi*: 'To my Lovinge Smallocke J: D:' On comparing these letters with initials known to be in the handwriting of Day, allowing for the difference between a formal and a running hand, he was led to the conclusion that they were by the same writer. In addition he pointed out that the play bore the name of the same publisher, John Wright, who in 1607 published *The Travels of the Three Brothers Shirley*, in which as we know (cf. *ante*, p. 600) Day had a hand. Moreover, Day was a Cambridge man; and, finally, his frequent association with Dekker may help to account for the unkindliness of his reference to Ben Jonson. In commenting on these arguments as insufficient to establish the case, Mr. Bullen (*Introduction to the Works of John Day*, pp. 31 *seqq.*) pointed out that more might have been made of it by adverting to the following circumstances. Kemp, who appears in *The Travels of the Three Brothers* (cf. *ante*, p. 602), also appears in *The Return from Parnassus*. Of more significance is the general parallelism (not identity) of scheme between the *Parnassus Plays* and Day's *Peregrinatio Scholastica* (cf. *ante*, p. 634), and especially the fact that both the *Peregrinatio* and the *Return* represent simony as an obstacle to the due recompense of scholarship. In commenting on the known writings of Day, I have directed attention to a few minor coincidences, to which it is unnecessary to return. For I agree with Mr. Bullen, that while it is quite possible that Day made contributions to the play or plays, Mr. Bolton Corney's arguments were quite insufficient to prove Day's authorship of them. He had, it must be remembered, been a member of Caius College, and not of St. John's. If, as there is no reason to doubt (see *ante*, p. 590), he was the John Dey admitted to Caius

Narcissus (1602).

In the same year in which the last play in the *Parnassus* trilogy was in all probability presented at St. John's College, Cambridge, the members of the College at Oxford

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in 1592 and expelled in 1593, it is hardly likely that he should have lingered in the place till 1598, should have then written a play for the Johnians, and should in 1601 have pretended that this was the cause of his having lost his degree. In any event he had then entirely left the University and was hard at work for Henslowe, in a very different literary atmosphere from that in which these plays were written.

Mr. I. Gollancz, who will no doubt find an opportunity of doing more complete justice to his views, has recognised that the key to the question of the authorship of the plays, if it is to be found at all, must be sought in the interpretation of the Prologue to the *First Part* of the *Return*. A passage in this Prologue implies, always supposing, as Mr. Macray says in his *Preface*, that it is to be 'taken *au sérieux*, and not simply as jocular,' that the author had failed to obtain his B.A. degree at Cambridge, had found himself obliged to put up instead with some 'sillie poore degree' obtained in Germany, and had then returned to his own University. The Prologue adds, that

> 'Hee never since durst name a peece of cheese,
> Though Cheshire seems to priviledge his name.'

The conclusion that he was a Cheshire man, as Mr. Macray observes, tallies with the circumstances that the MS. from which the plays are printed bears as its owner's name the words 'Edmunde Rishton, Lancastrensis,' and that a second contemporary MS. of the third play, formerly in the possession of Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps, likewise came from a library in the North. (Mr. Fleay notes that the Ashton fellowships at St. John's were limited to natives of the diocese of Chester.) But how as to the 'piece of cheese'? Dr. Hales was informed by Dr. Schoell that *Käsebettler* or *Käsejäger* was a nickname in Germany for the *scholastici vagantes* or unsettled students of the period; and this may be so, though I have searched Zarncke in vain for an illustration of the use. Mr. Gollancz, however, suggests another explanation, and if this could be accepted we might suppose the mention in the *Prologue* of a journey to Germany to be merely, as he says, an introduction to the ensuing jest. The word *cheese*, he ingeniously suggests, conceals an allusion to *Caius* College, as pronounced according to the fashion of the sixteenth century, *i.e.*, I presume, as the name of the founder was and is pronounced. He cites at the same time a curious instance of the pun from Uffenbach's *Merkwürdige Reisen*, where the traveller tells of a jest perpetrated on him at Cambridge and turning on 'Tschie's' *sive* 'Käse-Collegium.' There may, as he says, have been some current joke at Caius on the subject, which had its origin in the experiences of some member of the College in Germany. (Perhaps, unlike the Fleming in *Jack Straw*, *ante*. p. 611 *note*, he had asked for 'bread and cheese in good and perfect English.')

Assuming, then, the author to have been a Caius man, Mr. Gollancz asks, was he not Day—or *Dey* as his name is spelt in the College register? Now 'dey,' it appears, is equivalent to dairymaid or dairyman; see *The New English Dictionary*, s.v. *dey* (and dey-house = cheese-house, 1587). If so, Cheshire might certainly be said to have 'privileged' the author's name. But the difficulty of accounting for Day's long-protracted connexion with, bearing the same name—though dedicated to a different saint—and exceptionally awake to the attractions of the drama[1], likewise treated themselves to the performance of an academical play. This composition, which was acted by youths of the parish, is called *Narcissus* by its first editor[2]. This amusing production, more or less based on the beautiful myth in the *Metamorphoses*[3], but treating its story with youthful recklessness, is, in a word, a burlesque of the familiar classical tale. The author or authors have not altogether shaken off the obligations of scholarship, but they openly revel in the license of the occasion, with regard both to the treatment of the story, and more especially to diction and rime[4]. No further note seems to be required concerning this piece of mirth, except that it introduces a personified Well by way of analogue to Pyramus and Thisbe's Wall[5]; and that the Induction is opened by the College Porter, who after supper brings in the 'boys of the parish' to perform their play before both 'Master and Mistris' of the College[6].

And so we return from these frolic side currents to the great main stream of our dramatic literature.

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if not sojourn at. Cambridge remains unaltered; and it would require overwhelming testimony (including an agreement of experts on the subject of the 'J: D:' signature) to convince me that the plays were written by a professional London playwright, in whose works I perceive no internal evidence of importance to associate him with this dramatic allegory of a sphere of life from which in all probability he had at an early date in his career became estranged.

[1] Six plays besides *Narcissus* in Miss Lee's list of Oxford plays were performed at St. John's.

[2] Miss Margaret Lee, whose edition of *Narcissus, a Twelft Night Merriment* (1893), with its *Introduction* and *Notes,* forms a valuable addition to the history of our academical drama.

[3] Bk. iii.

[4] 'Therfore take heed; yet, I bethink, at Delph
On Phibbus' walls is written: "Know thyselfe."
Shall hee not know himselfe, and so be laught on
Wheras Apollo cries: "Gnotti seauton."'

[5] 'Enter one with a buckett and boughes and grasse,' who after making his speech and arranging his locality, *exit,* leaving the bucket to represent him, as '*pars pro toto.*'

[6] The reigning Porter of St. John's was clearly an acknowledged minister of misrule; for Miss Lee prints in an Appendix some other speeches 'made for' him.

CHAPTER VII.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER

Beaumont and Fletcher.

AMONG those of our dramatists who either were contemporaries of Shakspere or came after him, it would be impossible to name more than three to whom the predilection or the literary judgment of any period of our national life has attempted to assign an equal rank by his

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[1] The First Folio of the *Comedies and Tragedies of Beaumont and Fletcher*, containing thirty-five plays (including a masque), 'never printed before,' appeared in 1647; the Second Folio, containing fifty comedies and tragedies, in 1679. The best edition of the works of Beaumont and Fletcher—and indeed a model edition of its kind—is that of Dyce (in 11 vols., with *Notes* and a *Biographical Memoir*, 1876). It has so completely superseded its predecessors that they need not be referred to except in the case of separate editions of particular plays; in Darley's edition of the *Works* (2 vols., 1839, second edition 1866), the text is that of Weber's (14 vols., 1812); but the *Introduction* is still worthy of notice.—Among earlier criticisms of Beaumont and Fletcher, Dryden's, more especially in *The Grounds of Criticism in Tragedy* (1679), are pre-eminently memorable.—John Monck Mason's *Comments on the Plays of Beaumont and Fletcher* appeared in 1797, and were reprinted in the following year.—Coleridge's disjointed, but in part very striking, notes on these poets are printed in vol. ii of his *Literary Remains*. See also Schlegel's and Hazlitt's *Lectures*.—The important speculations founded by Messrs. Fleay and R. Boyle on their critical enquiries into the text of 'Beaumont and Fletcher' are to be found in *The Transactions of the New Shakspere Society* and in *Englische Studien* as cited below; and their final results, in Mr. Fleay's case, in his *English Drama*, vol. i. pp. 164 *seqq.*, where he treats Fletcher and 'his coadjutors,' Beaumont, Field, and Massinger, in the same group. (Cf. also the references under *The Two Noble Kinsmen* and *Henry VIII* as to the papers of Spalding, Mr. R. Boyle, and others.) Spalding published in *The Edinburgh Review* for April, 1891, an article on *Beaumont and Fletcher and their Contemporaries*; W. Bodham Donne's delightful essay on *Beaumont and Fletcher*, reprinted in his *Essays on the Drama* from *Fraser's Magazine* for March, 1850, should likewise not be overlooked. More recently, Mr. G. C. Macaulay has published an interesting critical study on *Francis Beaumont* (1883).—Mr. Swinburne's celebrated essay on *Beaumont and Fletcher*, originally published in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, is reprinted in his *Studies in Prose and Poetry* (1894).—The notice of Beaumont in vol. iv of the *Dictionary of National Biography* (1885) is by Dr. Grosart, and that of Fletcher in vol. xix (1889)

side. In the Argo of the Elisabethan drama—as it presents itself to the imagination of our own latter days—Shakspere's is, and must remain, the commanding figure. Next to him sit the twin literary heroes, Beaumont and Fletcher—more or less vaguely supposed to be inseparable from one another in their works. The Herculean form of Jonson takes a somewhat disputed precedence among the other princes; the rest of these are, as a rule, but dimly distinguished.

Variations in their fame.

The fame of Beaumont and Fletcher as dramatic writers has not, however, altogether withstood the test of time. About the date of Fletcher's death their popularity equalled, and may have evanescently surpassed, that of Shakspere[1]; and it maintained itself on some such level until the stage was overwhelmed by the civil troubles. Even during the period of the suppression of the theatre, the favour with which they had come to be regarded was shown by the relatively large number of their plays performed as 'drolls' on mountebanks' stages at fairs, and in halls and taverns[2]. When, shortly before the execution of the King, a few plays were surreptitiously acted at the Cockpit in Drury Lane, by a band of old and young actors, it was a tragedy of Fletcher's in the midst of which they were stopped by the soldiers and dragged off to prison in their stage-clothes[3]. On the return of better days for the stage, Beaumont and Fletcher may be said to have at once taken their place there as the favourite dramatists of the theatrical public. Among the plays acted immediately after the Restoration by Rhodes' company, of which Betterton was the star, more

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by Mr. Bullen.—Much new light has been thrown upon the sources of their plays in Dr. Emil Koeppel's *Quellen-Studien zu den Dramen Jonson's, Marston's, und Beaumont und Fletcher's* (Erlangen und Leipzig, 1895).—To Mr. A. Claghorn Potter we are indebted for a *Bibliography of Beaumont and Fletcher* published in 1890 as one of the *Harvard University Bibliographical Contributions*, edited by Mr. Justin Winsor.

[1] Cf. *ante*, vol. i. pp. 509-10.

[2] See Kirkman's *The Wits, or Sport upon Sport* (1672), from the title-page of which the above expressions are taken. While several of Fletcher's plays were thus, although in a truncated form, kept before the public, but one of these pieces is taken from Shakspere (*The Gravemakers*, from *Hamlet*), and one from Ben Jonson (*The Imperick*, from *The Alchemist*).

[3] *The Bloody Brother.* See Dyce, *Introduction*, p. lxxvii, from Wright's *Historia Histrionica*; and cf. R. W. Lowe, *Thomas Betterton*, p. 4.

than one was by Fletcher[1]; and during nine years or so of fitful play-going, in which fashion no doubt principally influenced his choice, Pepys saw nearly thrice as many of their plays performed as of Shakspere's[2]. During the whole of the Restoration period their dramatic works remained pre-eminently popular, and were freely altered and adapted, with or without acknowledgment, by contemporary playwrights. Fletcher shared with Shakspere the effectively, if not always correctly adjusted, praise and blame of Dryden[3], and bore the burden of Rymer's first assault upon Elisabethan and Jacobean tragedy[4]. During the eighteenth century, though three collective editions of their works appeared at intervals, a gradual decline is observable in the estimate of their literary eminence, and by general consent they are reduced to the rank of

'twin stars that run
Their glorious course round Shakespeare's Golden Sun.'

As time went on, the stage proved an even less steady guardian of their reputation than literary criticism. They who in their own day had proclaimed themselves reformers of the theatre from the ribaldry and grossness disfiguring it, came to be regarded as types of licentiousness. It would indeed have been strange if they had not reflected the moral defects of the age which delighted in them. A closer and more discriminating study of their dramatic poetry begins with Charles Lamb and Coleridge; Schlegel, although his knowledge of their works was not very extensive, came near to a just estimate of the limits beyond which their genius does not enable them to pass. Dyce, 'frugal of comment[5],' has placed in the hands of a later generation the materials from which a less wavering judgment is forming itself as to the greatness and the weakness of two writers—if I may for the moment run the risk of speaking of them thus jointly—beyond dispute more attractive by the beauty of their creations than any and every one of Shakspere's fellow-dramatists[1].

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[1] *Ib.*, p. 61.

[2] See the list appended to Mr. H. B. Wheatley's *Samuel Pepys and the World he lived in.*

[3] See especially *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (1668); *The Defence of the Epilogue*, or *An Essay on the Dramatic Poetry of the Last Age* (1672), and *The Grounds of Criticism in Tragedy* in the *Preface* to *Troilus and Cressida* (1679).

[4] *The Tragedies of the Last Age considered, &c.* (1678).

[5] See W. B. Donne's admirable appreciation of Dyce's merits as an editor.

A brief sketch of their lives may conveniently precede a necessary attempt, before passing their several plays in review, to distinguish between those which are to be ascribed to them in common and those which should be assigned to Beaumont or Fletcher alone, or to the latter and an associate or associates other than Beaumont.

Life of John Fletcher (1579-1623).

Of the two men JOHN FLETCHER was the elder. He belonged to a family of some distinction in the world of Church and University. His grandfather had been deprived of his first living (Bishop's Stortford) under Queen Mary. His father, Richard Fletcher, was successively Fellow of Corpus Christi (then commonly called Bene't) College, Cambridge; minister of Rye in Sussex, where his son John was born in December, 1579; Dean of Peterborough, in which character he inflicted his presence upon Mary Queen of Scots at Fotheringay Castle and acted as chaplain at her execution; Bishop of Bristol; and finally Bishop of London, from which office he was speedily suspended, having incurred the Queen's displeasure by taking part in drawing up the Lambeth Articles and still more by a second marriage (with a widow too well known about the Court). Shortly after his resumption of his episcopal functions he died, leaving behind him a numerous family and a heavy debt[2]. His younger brother, Giles, served the State as a civil lawyer and on important diplomatic missions, one of which, to Russia, gave rise to an interesting publication by him concerning that country; he was also known as a writer of Latin verse. Phineas and Giles, the sons of the elder Giles Fletcher, achieved for themselves distinction in English poetic literature[1].

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[1] 'The loss of their names from the roll of English poetry,' writes Mr. Swinburne, 'would be only less than the loss of the few greatest inscribed on it. . . . Nothing could supply the want of their tragic, their comic, or romantic drama; no larger or more fiery planet can ever arise to supplant or to eclipse the twin lights of our zodiac.'

[2] He died, according to Fuller, of grief—for the Queen had not yet approved of his re-admission to Court; according to Camden, 'nicosia immodice hausta'—for he happened to be smoking when death overcame him.—There is an extremely unkind biographical notice of Bishop Fletcher in Harington's *Nugae Antiquae*, ed. Park (1804), vol. i. pp. 41 *seqq.*

Of John Fletcher's own early life very little is known. Born (in 1579) as a younger son, he would in any case have had to fight the battle of life with his own wits[2]; his father, who can have had little else to leave, assigned to him and his brother Nathaniel half of the paternal library[3]. It may be assumed as certain that John Fletcher was the youth so named who in 1591 was admitted pensioner at Bene't College, and who in 1593 gained a bible-clerkship there. Nothing is known concerning his career from this point onwards to the time when he is found connected with the London stage. The precise date of the commencement of this connexion is uncertain; but there can be little doubt that he was the author of the commendatory verses prefixed to *Volpone* (1607) and signed 'J. F.'; another copy of verses on the same occasion bore the signature of Beaumont. The earliest play attributed to their joint authorship was *The Woman-Hater*[4], published anonymously in the same year 1607; and in any event they may safely be concluded to have by this date become intimate with one another. *The Faithful Shepherdess*, written by Fletcher alone, was certainly printed early in

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[1] Phineas, the author of the extraordinary allegory (in which physiology is pressed into the service of poetry) called *The Purple Island*, also produced the pastoral drama of *Sicelides, or Piscatory* (printed 1631), which will be noticed below. Giles was author of the poem known as *Christ's Victory and Triumph in Heaven and Earth*, to which Milton is thought to have been indebted in *Paradise Regained*. His early poems certainly owed not a little to the Spenserian school, to which both the brothers belonged.

[2] In his plays Fletcher not unfrequently recurs to the topic of the hard lot of younger sons. See *The Honest Man's Fortune*, act iii. sc. 2; *The Queen of Corinth*, act i. sc. 2; *The Spanish Curate*, act i. sc. 1. Perhaps, however, he may be said to have made the *amende honorable* in *The Elder Brother*.

[3] Darley thought it improbable that Bishop Fletcher, who remembered a *college*, would have forgotten a *son* in his will. But, as W. B. Donne wittily observes, 'Bishop Fletcher's bequests resembled Diego's in his son's *Spanish Curate*. His executors must have asked: "Where shall we find those sums?"'

[4] The authorship of this play, as will be noted below, is a disputed question.

1610, if not in the preceding year. The date of *Philaster*, which according to Dryden was their first successful joint venture, cannot have been later than 1611; and their literary co-operation, so far as the evidence of dates of publication goes, continued up to Beaumont's death in March 1616, although very probably Beaumont had at an earlier date ceased to write for the stage. Fletcher's connexion with it, on the other hand, remained unbroken. As a dramatic writer he was, as will be seen, associated with several other contemporaries; but the only one of these with whom his acquaintance ripened into an intimacy at all resembling that which had united him to Beaumont was Massinger, who was afterwards buried by his side, and who is spoken of as his 'great friend' in an *Epitaph* on the two poets[1]. By Jonson, from whose lips censure came more readily than sympathetic appreciation, Fletcher was, with Chapman, both praised and 'loved[2].' His supposed early association with Shakspere is unproved by any satisfactory external evidence, besides being *a priori* unlikely; for Fletcher cannot have been more than a beginner when Shakspere was withdrawing from work for the stage[3]. More generally, his popularity with his brother-playwrights, his wit in conversation, his modesty, his hatred of flattering the public by 'crouching' prologues[4], and his honest love of well-earned applause, are qualities attested by satisfactory evidence. Far from uniformly successful as a dramatist[5], it would seem that Fletcher was not accustomed to lose either his temper or his time in angry recrimination, and that he reached the end of his laborious career without, so far as we know, having made an enemy. I have been much struck by the passages in his works where he recurs to a conception which undoubtedly had a very vital significance for him—that of a gentleman[1]. Such then we may assume him to have been, not by birth and breeding only, but in conduct. Even patronage seems to have been a matter of indifference, if not of irksomeness[2]. For the rest, his friendships and his literary labours seem to have sufficed him for happiness; and there is no proof that he was ever married. In August, 1625, he died, a victim of the plague, and was buried at St. Saviour's, Southwark. His grave is unknown[3].

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[1] By Sir Aston Cokayne, quoted *ap*. Dyce, *Introduction*, p. lxxii.

[2] See *Conversations with Drummond*, iii and xi. Besides praising him and Fletcher as masque-writers, Jonson expressed his satisfaction of *The Faithful Shepherdess* (*ib*. xii).

[3] Cf. *ante*. p. 38.

[4] See the Prologue written for a revival of *The Nice Valour*.

[5] *The Faithful Shepherdess* and *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* were damned by the audience, and *The Coxcomb* (on account of its length) by part of it; and see Brome's Dedication of *Monsieur Thomas*, where it is stated that 'the dull apprehensions of former times gave but slender allowance to many' of Fletcher's plays. (Dyce, *u.s.*, p. lxxiii.)

Life of Francis Beaumont (1584–1616).

Of the life of FRANCIS BEAUMONT we possess rather more particulars than of that of his friend. He was born at Grace-Dieu in Leicestershire, the seat of his ancestors, in 1584. His lineage was ancient, and both his grandfather and father held high legal office. The family was specially distinguished by literary gifts; the dramatist's elder brother, Sir John, whose poems were commended by Jonson, thirsted for a fame which he can hardly be said to have conquered. (His poems have been edited by Dr. Grosart in his *Fuller Worthies Series.*) Similar aspirations seem to have descended to the next generation of Beaumonts[4]. Francis Beaumont, after a short residence at Broadgates Hall, Oxford, was entered of the Inner Temple in 1600. He seems, however, soon to have left the law to take care of itself. The evidence on which he has been concluded to have made his first appearance as a writer of verse at the early date of 1602 is unconvincing; for apart from a minor effort which cannot with absolute certainty be ascribed to him, the licentious Ovidian poem of *Salmacis and Hermaphroditus* was not fathered upon him till 1640[1]; and the testimony of the signatures to the *Invocation to Calliope* and commendatory verses in the edition of that date—'F. B.' and 'J. F.' respectively—has been invalidated by a reference to the original edition of 1602[2]. At the same time, colour is lent to the supposition by the style of the poem, whose imitativeness is not its solitary boyish quality. That he preserved his connexion with his Inn is shown both by the fact that at a later date he was chosen to write the *Mask of the Inner Temple and Gray's Inn* for the marriage festivities of the Princess Elisabeth (1613)[3] and by other evidence[4]. His literary tastes and traditions very naturally brought him into contact with Ben Jonson, to whom he addressed more than one commendatory poem[5], and the memories of whose

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[1] See, above all, the fine passage in *The Nice Valour* (act v. sc. 3):

'*Duke*. . . .
I cannot make you gentlemen, that's a work
Rais'd from your own deservings; merit, manners,
And in-born virtue does it; let your own goodness
Make you so great, my power shall make you greater;
And more to encourage you, this I add agen,
There's many grooms now exact gentlemen.'

The character of Lysander in *The Lover's Progress* is a really fine gentleman, every inch of him.

[2] See the very curious 'Ode,' to Sir William Skipwith, prefixed to *The Faithful Shepherdess*.

[3] See below as to Massinger.

[4] Sir John's son and namesake was one of the Cambridge men who contributed to the collection of verses in memory of Edward King, of which Milton's *Lycidas* formed part. Dyce mentions other members of the family who wrote poetry; among them were another Francis Beaumont, Fellow of Peterhouse, who belonged to the group of which Crashaw was a member.

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and like him became a convert to the Church of Rome, and Dr. Joseph Beaumont, a collateral relation, who died as Master of the same College in 1699. The Master's poems, including the moral allegory of *Psyche*, a work of great length, afterwards slightly enlarged by his son Charles, have been edited by Dr. Grosart in his *Chertsey Worthies Series* (2 vols., 1880).

[1] Beaumont's authorship of *Salmacis and Hermaphroditus* has however been doubted by Collier.

[2] Where, as stated by Collier and verified by the present Librarian of the Bodleian, the Invocation is unsigned, and the commendatory lines in question is 'A. F.' See the Appendix to Mr. Macaulay's *Essay*, pp. 197–8.

[3] As to this masque, the literary significance of which lies in its furnishing an incontrovertibly independent example of Beaumont's versification, it will suffice to note that it was a rival production to Chapman's *Mask of the Middle Temple and Lincoln's Inn*, prepared for the same occasion. (Cf. *ante*, p. 441.) Its merits cannot be said to rise beyond the average of such compositions: the pleasing device of the marriage between Thames and Rhine, of which the suggestion need not be directly referred to Spenser, all but fades out of the dialogue between Mercury and Iris.

[4] Mr. Edward Scott has kindly communicated to me his discovery in the British Museum of a MS. which on perusal proved to be a witty address by Francis Beaumont to the Students of the Inner Temple. In this the writer alludes to the *Shew of Early Amity* as having been performed at their last Christmas revels. A mention of the King proves this address to date from the reign of James I.

[5] On the occasions of the production of *The Fox* (1607), *The Silent Woman* (1609), and *Catiline* (1611), respectively.

favourite haunt he celebrated in a famous tribute[1]. Rumour afterwards ascribed to Beaumont the honour of having been accepted as counsellor by Ben Jonson himself in the composition and construction of his plays[2]; it is certain that their intimacy was close, and their regard for one another cordial[3].

Beaumont's poems—otherwise uninteresting, and including at least one early example of the worst extravagances of the Fantastic School (*An Elegy on the Lady Markham*)—show him to have maintained his position in the sphere of society to which he by birth belonged. His friendship with Jonson, and the intimacy with Fletcher, formed probably much about the same time, brought him into connexion with the stage, for at the earliest he began writing in 1607. Choice, or caprice, rather than necessity must have induced him to adopt the Bohemian habits with which tradition has credited (and also discredited) his friendship with Fletcher; for in 1605 he inherited part of his eldest brother's property. About 1613 he married a lady of birth and fortune (Ursula, daughter and co-heiress of Henry Isley, of Sundridge in Kent); but he died not long afterwards, on March 6, 1616. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, near Chaucer and Spenser[4], but in what precise spot is unknown. Not a few voices—among whom Dyce has naturally sought to include Fletcher's[5]—lamented the

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[1] *Master Francis Beaumont's Letter to Ben Jonson*, which contains the famous passage:

'What things have we seen
Done at the Mermaid!' &c.

[2] See the well-known passage in Dryden's *Essay of Dramatic Poesy*: 'Beaumont was so accurate a judge of plays, that Ben Jonson, while he lived, submitted all his writings to his censure, and 'tis thought, used his judgment in correcting, if not contriving, all his plots.'

[3] See Ben Jonson's charming lines *To Francis Beaumont*, in answer to the *Letter*. The passing cavil in the *Conversations* (xi) is noted below.

[4] See the two versions of William Basse's celebrated lines on the death of Shakspere in *Centurie of Prayse*, 2nd ed., p. 136. According to Dr. Ingleby, Chaucer's tomb is as a matter of fact 'pretty central between Spenser's and Beaumont's.'

[5] See the *Sonnet* printed by Dyce, *u. s.*, p. liii, which may well be supposed to have been written in memory of one to whose loss its pathetic expressions are so signally appropriate:—

His personal reputation.

premature loss of a companion who seems to have been universally beloved. The touching lines of his surviving elder brother imply—who can say whether with absolute veracity—that his strength had been exhausted by his poetic labours[1]. Of Beaumont's character it is for obvious reasons less easy to form a definite conception than of his friend's. But though a genuine popularity may naturally have attached to a young man of rank and fortune moving on terms of friendly equality among those with whom the pursuit of an art was a question of bread as well as of honour[2]—though a halo of admiring regrets naturally surrounded the memory of one who died young in the midst of his fame—and though, lastly, it is probable that the surviving Fletcher, in especial, assiduously proclaimed his friend's merits to a willing audience—yet we need not undervalue the agreement among his contemporaries that in him was lost one 'in the foremost rank of the rar'st Wits' of his age. Tradition has handed down the 'judiciousness' of Beaumont as his most memorable characteristic in his relations to two men, neither of whom he can have equalled in creative power—Ben Jonson and Fletcher. And whatever judgment may be formed concerning his claim to the laurels of which he is popularly allowed an equal share, he must assuredly have deserved the esteem with which he seems to have been regarded by so many of his contemporaries, the friendship with which he was honoured by Ben Jonson, and the fraternal affection inspired by him in Fletcher.

Concerning the personal relations between Beaumont and Fletcher little is known beyond traditions in which

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'Oh, noble youth, to thy ne'er-dying name,
Oh, happy youth, to thy still-growing fame,
To thy long peace in earth, this sacred knell
Our lost loves ring—farewell, farewell, farewell!'

[1] Sir John, the author of the poem of *Bosworth Field*, with which these lines were printed. They are quoted by Mr. Macaulay.

[2] To nobly aspiring youth even a little vanity is readily forgiven; nor, when Jonson told Drummond 'that Francis Beaumont loved too much himself and his own verses,' is it probable that any serious censure was intended. A relation of 'friendly equality' seems indicated by the customary abbreviation of Beaumont's name as 'Frank,' with regard to which John Davies of Hereford (see Dr. Grosart's edition of his *Works*, vol. ii. p. 58) confirms Thomas Heywood (cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 471).

Beaumont and Fletcher's friendship and literary partnership.

there is obviously no reason for placing any literal trust. They must have been brought together by common tastes which may or not, even before their first acquaintance with one another, have led them to engage severally in what was so soon to become their common pursuit. Possibly Jonson, possibly some other of the dramatic writers with whom we afterwards find them connected, introduced the elder to the younger of the pair; and unless one of the early editions was right in ascribing to their joint authorship the comedy of *The Woman-Hater*, entered on the Registers in 1607, and perhaps performed already in the previous year, it would seem natural to suppose that *Four Plays in One*, which there is reason to believe was acted as early as 1608, and in which the contributions of each of the two writers from the nature of the case remained perfectly distinguishable, was their earliest joint production. Internal evidence seems to show conclusively that *The Scornful Lady*, published with the names of both dramatists immediately after Beaumont's death in 1616, was produced in 1609; and from these dates[1] onwards there is every reason for concluding that they continuously composed plays in common. It is practically certain that Fletcher's activity found opportunities during this period for dramatic authorship in which he was assisted by others than Beaumont. On the other hand, dramatic composition was not again—if it had been previously on at least one occasion—essayed independently by Beaumont. The total number of extant plays in which they were jointly concerned does not, according to the most liberal computation[2], exceed fifteen, and it is possible that in more than one of these another author, or other authors, had a hand. According to the lowest reckoning, Fletcher was sole author of sixteen plays, and he may safely be concluded to have had a share in at least as many more. Still, the common labours of the two poets were both considerable in amount and continuous, and they indisputably comprised some of the masterpieces in the entire list of works written either partly or wholly by Fletcher. During their literary association he and Beaumont are said to have lived together in the most intimate personal intercourse. According to the tradition handed down by Aubrey, they inhabited the same dwelling, 'on the Banke side, not far from the Play-house,' and had everything in common—even 'the same cloaths and cloake.' If this manner of life must have perforce come to an end with Beaumont's marriage, and even if their joint authorship ceased about this time, we may suppose that the 'wonderfull consimility of phansy' between them was strong enough to endure to the last. Shirley[1] describes the pair without drawing any distinction between them, as 'upon every occasion so fluent, to talk a comedy'; and though their friendship was not one of many years, yet it is known how an intellectual and moral resemblance, such as will defy the most cunning analysis, may grow up between friends (or between a husband and wife) by nature quite unlike one another.

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[1] As to these dates, I have followed the conclusions of Mr. Fleay in his important paper *On the Chronology of the Plays of Fletcher and Massinger*, in vol. ix (1886) of *Englische Studien*, reaffirmed in his *English Drama*.

[2] Including *The Woman-Hater*, *Thierry and Theodoret*, *Wit at Several Weapons*, and *Love's Cure*.

Habits of literary partnership among Elisabethan dramatists.

The collaboration of authors is one of the most ordinary usages of dramatic literature—from the days when Eupolis backed up (or pretended to have backed up) Aristophanes in his *Knights*, to those when Alexandre Dumas the elder supplied the 'ideas' of dramas to a whole *bureau* of disciples[2]. The Elisabethan stage, as has been repeatedly shown in this survey, was particularly familiar with this system. At certain periods in his career, Shakspere may be supposed to have received as well as given assistance in the daily work of his profession; Jonson occasionally contributed to the plays of other authors; the association of Chapman and Dekker, of Middleton and William Rowley, of Chettle and Day, and numerous other combinations of various and interchanging grades, were familiar to managers and printers. Fletcher himself, as we shall see, took frequent advantage of the aid of other dramatists besides Beaumont—more especially of that of Massinger. What between making 'additions' to old plays, by way of supplying Henslowe and his rivals with new or counter-attractions. and cheerfully dividing the profit or credit of new ventures with their fellows, the Elisabethan dramatists cannot have retained any scruples to speak of with regard to the responsibilities involved in such partnerships. Theatrical experience, insight into effect, and a talent for the provision of purple patches, were not in the same measure proper to all these writers; yet such was the mighty impulse and the extraordinary activity of the age, that few of them were wholly devoid of any one of these or of other requisite qualifications. They would probably have felt amused as well as flattered, could they have foreseen that the plays to which they had contributed would be posthumously analysed, for the purpose of determining the extent of the share of each of them in their conjoint labours. Still, there must have been some consciousness of piecemeal work in this kind of authorship. and a want of that self-concentration which is all but indispensable in the exertion of the higher kind of creative power.

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[1] In the *Address to the Reader* prefixed to the folio of 1647.

[2] *Κἀκείνους τοὺς ἱππέας συνεποίησα τῷ φαλακρῷ τούτῳ κἀδωρησάμην.* Schol. Ar. *Nub.*, v. 550; quoted by Müller-Strübing, *Aristophanes und die historische Kritik*, p. 22.—The younger Alexandre Dumas rather ungenially published some joint plays, for which he was not entirely responsible, under the title of *Théâtre des autres.*

Circumstances of the co-operation between Beaumont and Fletcher.

Was the partnership between Beaumont and Fletcher merely of the ordinary type to which I have adverted? In the first place, there were certainly circumstances favouring in their case the growth of a far closer union of intellectual powers than that which springs up, more or less as a matter of course, between men of the same generation writing for the same public. They were separated in age by not more than five years; they were both the sons of men belonging to the higher professional classes, and both University-bred. Both were at the very beginning of their literary careers brought under the influence of a momentous epoch in the history of our dramatic literature; for they were still unknown, at least as dramatists, at a time when Shakspere had already produced most of the works of his maturity, and Jonson some at least of his masterpieces. Neither Beaumont nor Fletcher, the great body of whose writings we certainly in each case possess, seems to have been gifted with that kind of original force which makes it imperative on a writer sooner or later in the course of his creative labours to emancipate himself from the controlling influence of predecessors or contemporaries. As to learning, we may safely assume both of them to have been acquainted with the Latin, French, Spanish and Italian tongues. Such differences as are noticeable in the outward circumstances of the two friends were hardly of a nature to be likely to reflect themselves in their productions. Fletcher, we cannot doubt, was familiar with the stress of narrow means, and perhaps partly for this reason more intent than Beaumont upon theatrical as the only profitable species of literary work. There is no reason to suppose that he was like Beaumont member of an Inn of Court, or otherwise maintained his connexion with persons of higher social standing. Finally Beaumont married, while Fletcher seems to have remained a bachelor; so that altogether the latter was established on a far more permanent footing than Beaumont as a citizen of the theatrical world of the day. But these distinctions must either have been forgotten, or were not yet in existence, when they worked in common. Altogether, few men can ever have been more likely mutually to assimilate than Beaumont and Fletcher. As to the choice of their dramatic subjects they must often have been in natural accord, and the warmth and constancy of their friendship could hardly but foster the ready mutual deference from which their joint labours would derive a rare harmony of conception and execution.

Are their respective contributions to their joint works distinguishable?

Under these circumstances there would be nothing unreasonable in supposing Beaumont and Fletcher to have succeeded in becoming *one author*—after the fashion in which Clarangè in *The Lover's Progress*[1] says that he and his friend Lydian became 'one soldier'—and the bond of their literary fellowship, like the knot of love between Palamon and Arcite in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*[2], to have been

> 'Tied, weav'd, entangled, with so true, so long,
> And with a finger of so deep a cunning,'

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[1] Act ii. sc. 1.

[2] Act i. sc. 3.

that the most keen-sighted literary criticism would have been unprofitably employed in seeking to disentangle it.

Such, indeed, has been the opinion of some of Beaumont and Fletcher's admirers both in their own and in later days. A contemporary, in a commendatory poem of great spirit, arrived at the conclusion that they were

> 'both for both, not semi-wits:
> Each piece is wholly two, yet never splits;
> Ye are not two faculties and one soul still,
> He th' understanding, thou the quick free-will;
> But, as two voices in one song embrace,
> Fletcher's keen treble and deep Beaumont's bass.
> Two full, congenial souls; still both prevailed;
> His house and thine were quartered, not impaled[1].'

An accomplished scholar of the last generation who quoted these lines[2] described the problem of 'the respective shares of Beaumont and Fletcher in the dramas which bear their joint names' as insoluble. In a more reckless spirit a critic of much ability[3] had not many years previously confessed that he 'cared little about knowing which plays were written by the one, which by the other, or which by both'; and it is quite obvious that he knew as little as he cared. Even Dyce, while trusting to an insight by which he was rarely deceived when forming a judgment as to the authorship of doubtful plays, refrained from any endeavour to distinguish between the contributions of the two poets to the works ascribed to them conjointly[4].

On the other hand, not a vestige of external evidence exists to support the tradition, loose in itself, that 'Beaumont's judgment check'd what Fletcher writ[5],' or the theory of Beaumont having been more peculiarly under the influence of the precepts or example of Jonson, while Fletcher was a 'limb of Shakspere' in a more special sense than that he approached more nearly than his associate to Shakspere in some of his dramatic gifts.

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[1] *On the Happy Collection of Mr. Fletcher's Works.* By J. Berkenhead. The same is the spirit of Jasper Maine's lines *On the Works of Beaumont and Fletcher*, which, he says, present 'one poet in a pair of friends.'

[2] The late Mr. W. B. Donne.

[3] The late Professor Spalding, in the article in the *Edinburgh Review* cited above.

[4] So far from this having been attempted in the early Folios, Sir Aston Cokayne justly complained that the printers had not even tried to give each his due where this could be done with certainty, and to state which of the plays in the Folio of 1647 were written after Beaumont's death.

[5] Pope may have derived this notion from Cartwright, who says in one of his commendatory poems on Fletcher's plays :—

The evidence on this head internal only:

It seems to follow that the only possible evidence on which it is possible to base any systematic attempt to distinguish Beaumont's individual characteristics as a dramatic poet from Fletcher's, and thence to draw conclusions as to their relative shares in the works jointly composed by them, can be internal only. And so far as I can see, the time has passed away for maintaining a purely negative attitude towards this question, or for trusting more or less confidently to the impressions of students of taste and experience. To Mr. Fleay belongs the credit of having shown the way towards definite conclusions by means of an inductive process not the less sound in its general method because in some instances the use made of it may be open to doubt. His claim to such an acknowledgment has been very readily and fully allowed by Mr. R. Boyle, who has followed up and expanded his argument[1]. To put the matter briefly, the labours of these scholars have so con-

'Fletcher, though some call it thy fault that wit
So overflow'd thy scenes, that e'er 'twas fit
To come upon the stage, Beaumont was fain
To bid thee be more dull; that's, write again
And bate some of thy fire; which from thee came
In a clear, bright, full, but too large a flame;
And, after all, (finding thy genius such
That blunted, and allay'd, 'twas yet too much,)
Added his sober spunge: and did contract
Thy plenty to less wit, to make't exact,' &c.—

Yet, as is clear from what follows, Cartwright did not himself consider that there was any essential difference between the plays written by Fletcher conjointly with Beaumont and those written by the former alone.—For some other early notions as to the distinction to be drawn between the work or the qualities of the two dramatists, see Macaulay, *u. s.*, pp. 30-1.

[1] See Mr. Fleay's paper *On Metrical Tests as applied to Dramatic Poetry. Part II. Beaumont, Fletcher and Massinger*, in *Transactions of the Shakspere Society*, 1874. He there sets forth as the distinguishing formal characteristics of Fletcher, first, his use of double or feminine endings, which he employs more largely than any other English author, and, secondly, the frequent pauses in his verse at the end of each line—the so-called stopped line. He

and more especially turning on versification.

sistently and effectively applied the test of versification to the plays known as Beaumont and Fletcher's, as to corroborate or supplement the external evidence which entitles us to divide these plays into distinct groups according to their respective authorship. Furthermore, in the plays assignable to Beaumont and Fletcher conjointly, the application of this test has enabled us to assign to each of them,

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adds certain other characteristics, which are partly of less importance: partly, as it seems to me, less trustworthy; and he compares the usage of Massinger on all these heads with that of Fletcher.

In his *English Drama*, vol. i. p. 178, Mr. Fleay states that the marked difference of the metrical forms between the two earlier and the two later of the *Triumphs* included in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Four Plays in One* furnished him with a basis for the process of separating their work in all the plays attributed to them in common—a problem previously regarded as insoluble. (He had also discovered an apparently insignificant piece of evidence—the variation in the accentuation of a French proper name in the play of *The Little French Lawyer*, where he had suspected Massinger's co-operation.) Availing himself of the clues thus offered by Mr. Fleay, Mr. R. Boyle devoted a vast expenditure of time and trouble to an elaborate enquiry into the authorship of the entire series of plays involved in the complicated problem. In the papers contributed by him to *Englische Studien* (vols. v–x. 1882–7), and summarised in the *Shakspere Society's Transactions* (1880–6, pp. 579 *seqq*), he not only furnished full statistics as to the tests of versification used by Mr. Fleay, and certain minor tests of the same kind added by himself, but he applied other tests likewise,—with results on the whole remarkably corroborative of those reached by his predecessor. (Without at present dwelling on non-formal tests, I may here add that such are exclusively applied by Mr. Fleay in his paper *On the Chronology of Fletcher and Massinger* in *Englische Studien*, vol. ix, which I have already cited and of which I shall make further use.)

While the concurrent prevalence of double (frequently varied by triple and even quadruple) endings and of stopped lines appears to me an unmistakeable mark of Fletcher—Massinger likewise affecting feminine endings, though not to the same extent, but rarely using stopped lines—I should be slow to attach a similar importance to the supposed 'tests' of the use of rime and the exclusion of prose. It seems undeniable that in the plays known to have been written by Fletcher alone, he used rime sparingly, and eschewed prose altogether. But I can perceive no reason why, in plays in which early in his career he co-operated with Beaumont, Fletcher should not have occasionally used it—whether in deference to a predilection with which we may if we like credit his companion, or because he had not yet himself adopted a practice of his own to the contrary; in the pastoral drama of *The Faithful Shepherdess* he showed himself to be on good terms with rime. Again, after he and Beaumont had agreed, as we may fairly suppose them to have done, upon part of any joint play being written in prose, why should Fletcher have refused to take his share in any such part,—although, like Massinger, he may have preferred in plays of which he was sole author not to allow any prose to interrupt a style so peculiar to himself as his own was?

if not with certainty, at least with reasonable probability, his respective share in these several productions. At the same time, it should be borne in mind that in any passage or scene of a joint play Fletcher may have added touches to the writing of Beaumont, or *vice versâ*; and that thus no formal test can become absolutely decisive, unless it should prove possible to show that the differences of form reflect themselves in differences of a more important kind.

But no mental or moral test seems successfully applicable.

Can it, however, be said that the most successful series of endeavours to distinguish Fletcher's *hand* from Beaumont's is likely to have the further result of enabling us to distinguish the *mind* of either from that of his friend? The attempts which have been made in this direction have for the most part been too slight to be satisfactory[1]. An examination of the several plays noticed in the following pages will, I think, show that characteristics which will certainly not be denied to Fletcher, such as great sweetness of pathos and unbounded vivacity of humour, are shared with plays certainly belonging to himself alone, by plays in which Beaumont certainly co-operated, and are signally perceptible in particular passages of those plays which the evidence of versification inclines us to attribute to the latter[2]. I am not aware that any of Fletcher's unassisted plays are in some respects more devoid of 'judgment' than certain of those in which Beaumont is held to have taken part[3]; while on the other hand I doubt whether any of the joint plays surpass in cleverness of construction some in which Fletcher worked alone[1]. Cavils of this kind might be multiplied; but I am at a loss to see in what respect it would prove possible to show that the co-operation of Beaumont either enhanced or impeded the creative powers of Fletcher. Doubtless their joint productions[2] are not disfigured by such offences against a high standard of dramatic morality as those which disfigure certain plays written independently by Fletcher only; but he would be a rash judge who, with some of the joint plays before him, should conclude Beaumont to have acted in this respect as a 'check' upon his friend[3]. For all we know to the contrary, Beaumont and Fletcher were alike dramatic poets of so high an ability as to be able to work on terms of equality, and to conceive in thorough harmony with one another what in certain respects of form they may have to a great degree executed independently; while it is evident that neither of them was possessed of creative powers with which capabilities of an inferior order could under no circumstances be fused in authorship.

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[1] See Mr. R. Boyle's essay in the *Transactions*, already cited. He concludes a not very impressive attempt at delineating Beaumont's mental and moral characteristics with a rather obscure sarcasm: 'Doubtless, had he lived longer, he would under such an excellent master as James I, have shaken off his leanings to the absurdity of the Divine Right, and with it perhaps his sentimentality.'—Some very interesting suggestions in the direction of marking Beaumont's essential characteristics will be found in Mr. E. H. Oliphant's essay on *The Works of Beaumont and Fletcher* in *Englische Studien*, vols. xiv–xvi (1890–2).

[2] So *e.g.* in *Philaster*. Or, again, observe the humour of *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, all the prose of which Mr. Fleay attributes to Beaumont. With regard to the *Four Plays in One*, it is difficult to resist the conclusion of Mr. Fleay already adverted to. Yet as to treatment of subjects, the last of the four *Triumphs*, which on the evidence of versification is Fletcher's, least readily accommodates itself to our conception of Fletcher's dramatic or poetic genius.

[3] *E.g. Thierry and Theodoret; A King and no King.* (It is right, however, to say that as to the former Mr. Boyle excludes the co-operation of Beaumont.)

I proceed briefly to notice (1) the plays which seem to be attributable to the joint composition of both dramatists, distinguishing some to which a third, or even a third and a fourth, author have been held to have contributed; (2) those which may with certainty be ascribed to Fletcher only; and (3) those which are known or thought to have been written by Fletcher conjointly with some dramatist or other dramatists, but not with Beaumont, under this head directing special attention to Massinger's probable co-operation in a large proportion of the series. My remarks on these several groups of plays will, however, be appropriately preceded by a few words concerning a dramatic production of Fletcher's which occupies a place of its own among his works, and was written at an earlier period than any other play which can be confidently ascribed to him alone. To Beaumont's independent authorship it is only possible to assign with certainty the masque adverted to above; though the comedy of *The Woman-Hater*, formerly supposed to have been Fletcher's unassisted composition, has likewise been held to be Beaumont's alone. Of this, therefore, a short notice may, in the first instance, find a place here.

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[1] *E.g. The Chances; The Woman's Prize.*

[2] *The Captain* might be regarded as an exception; but opinions differ as to the authorship of this play.

[3] See *e.g. The Scornful Lady.*

Beaumont's (? *The Woman-Hater* (*pr.* 1607).

The Woman-Hater (entered on the Stationers' Registers and printed anonymously in 1607 as 'lately acted by the children of Paules') was in the quarto of 1648 assigned to Fletcher only, but in that of the following year (which included a Prologue in verse by D'Avenant) to both dramatists[1]. Although the value of neither of these pieces of conflicting evidence is important, Dyce considered that *The Woman-Hater* was Fletcher's unassisted composition. Later critics, however, favour the conclusion that this is the single play preserved to us which was written independently by Beaumont, possibly at a time when he had not yet essayed joint authorship with Fletcher, and when he was still mainly under the influence of Jonson. Such an influence may perhaps seem traceable in the more or less artificial 'humours' of the woman-hating Gondarino and of the 'voluptuous smell-feast' Lazarillo[2]. The play (contrary to Fletcher's practice in his indisputably unassisted work) contains a considerable amount both of prose and of rimed verse. There is of course no reason why Fletcher should not have made an early essay of this sort; but no internal indication of any kind conflicts with the assumption of Beaumont's authorship. Although written with much vivacity and with an ease of manner certainly striking in a young dramatist, *The Woman-Hater* cannot be ranked high as a comedy; and, indeed, there runs through it a very strong vein of burlesque. Of the two plots strung together in this play, Gondarino's brutal attempt to revenge himself upon Oriana for her importunate love is wholly unnatural; while the other, which turns on the eagerness of Lazarillo to partake at any risk—including marriage—of a fish-head, is farcically absurd, although the borrowed notion[1] is kept up with considerable spirit.

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[1] Mr. Fleay, in *Englische Studien*, vol. ix. p. 13, lays it down as a rule, that 'the attributions of authorship on titles of Quartos subsequent to 1638 are devoid of authority and frequently erroneous.' Moreover, in the prose Prologue the author is twice referred to as 'he that made this play.'

[2] I cannot perceive the necessity for Mr. Boyle's assumption of a second author associated with Beaumont, because of the twofold accentuation of the name Lazarillo and of the peculiarities of rhythm in a single scene (act v. sc. 5).

Fletcher's The Faithful Shepherdess (*printed by* 1610).

Very different in degree as well as in kind is the interest attaching to *The Faithful Shepherdess.* This extremely pleasing work of literary art, certainly published by the early part of the year 1610, and probably already in 1609[2], bore on its title-page the name of Fletcher only, nor can any importance be attached to a careless—or carelessly reported—word of Jonson's, coupling Beaumont with Fletcher in its authorship. Unfavourably received on its original production, *The Faithful Shepherdess* was extolled as a work of true poetic merit in several commendatory poems addressed to the author by way of commendation—including, together with an elaborate and earnest tribute from Beaumont, some characteristic verses from Jonson addressed 'to my worthy author, Mr. John Fletcher, upon his . . poem and play.' It was revived in 1634 as a court entertainment provided with scenes by Inigo Jones, and with a *Dialogue* by D'Avenant by way of prologue, and was thereupon several times performed with applause at the Blackfriars Theatre. The established position of *The Faithful Shepherdess* in our literature is warranted by its intrinsic merits; but it is doubly interesting to all lovers of one of the noblest among English poems, as having beyond all doubt suggested some of the beauties, as well as the general conception, of Milton's *Comus*[3].

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[1] It is taken from the chapter *de Umbrana* in Paulus Jovius' treatise *de Romanis piscibus.*

[2] Sir William Skipwith, one of the persons to whom it was dedicated, died in May 1610. As to indications of the date 1609, see Fleay, *English Drama,* vol. i. pp. 177–8.

[3] See in particular act iii. sc. 1, which it would appear was likewise imitated by Browne in his *Britannia's Pastorals,* doubtless likewise well known to Milton, and probably written after Fletcher's pastoral drama. (The First Part was published in 1616, but apparently written in part as

The Faithful Shepherdess, as its name indicates, was composed under the influence of the Italian pastoral drama, and more particularly of the *Pastor Fido* of Guarini, which has been briefly described above[1]. Of Guarini's pastoral drama it has been remarked that its title would more appropriately have been that which Fletcher actually gave to his imitation[2]. Yet the English *Pastorella Fida* is an imitation of the Italian play mainly in so far as its general style and treatment resemble those of its Italian prototype; its plot appears to be more or less original, and its personages are not very closely modelled upon any earlier characters. Cloe indeed has some of the features of Corisca in Guarini's pastoral; but the type of the wanton shepherdess occurs too frequently to be necessarily traceable to a particular example; and at all events there is no uniformity between original and copy. The Satyr, though a character with this name is to be found both in the *Pastor Fido* and in Tasso's *Aminta*, becomes, thanks to Fletcher's treatment, one of the most attractive figures in the poem. The relation between the Satyr and Clorin may have been suggested by passages in the *Faerie Queene*; while a more notable if more general resemblance has been pointed out between the transformation of Amarillis into Amoret and the Spenserian false Una and false Florimell[3]. Fletcher's other debts to Spenser are in the main of a trifling description, and consist in the names of a few characters (including Amoret), with perhaps here and there a phrase, taken from *The Shepherd's Kalendar*[4].

early as 1610, certainly by 1613.)—As is well observed by Mr. A. W. Verity, in the Introduction to his Pitt Press edition of *Comus* (1891), 'the motive of *The Faithful Shepherdess* is identical with that of *Comus*, viz. the strength of purity; and in Fletcher's heroine must be recognised an elder sister of Milton's Sabrina.'

[1] *Ante*, p. 382.

[2] The Dyce Library contains a 'pastoral comedy' entitled *La Pastora Fida* by 'F. F. Anglo-Britannus' (1653).

[3] Cf. as to the Satyr, *Faerie Queene*, bk. i. canto vi, and more particularly bk. vi. canto v; as to Amarillis-Amoret, cf. bk. i. canto i, and bk. iii. canto viii. (Koeppel, pp. 39-40.)

[4] A fine compliment is paid to Spenser under the name of Dorus—

'he
That was the soul and god of melody'—

Obviously, two dangers are involved in the view put forth by Fletcher in his address *To the Reader* on the subject of pastoral poetry, that it is 'a representation of shepherds and shepherdesses with their actions and passions, which must be such as may agree with their natures, at least not exceeding former fictions and vulgar traditions; they are not to be adorned with any art, but such improper[1] ones as nature is said to bestow, as singing and poetry; or such as experience may teach them, as the virtues of herbs and fountains, the ordinary course of the sun, moon, and stars. and the like.' These dangers are sameness and artificiality; neither of which Fletcher can be said to have avoided,—unlike Jonson, who, by giving to his *Sad Shepherd* a local habitation and a realistic tone, has at the same time introduced into his pastoral a greater measure of variety and naturalness. The progress of Fletcher's plot—with the exception of the incidents connected with the Sacred Well—is monotonous and tame; and the characters have no human interest. And the distinction between chaste and unchaste love on which the whole of the action is founded remains, as it is here exhibited, so superficial as to seem but a flimsy figment when compared with the mighty moral conflict so deeply conceived and powerfully developed in Milton's *Comus*. The beauties of *The Faithful Shepherdess* are accordingly in my opinion essentially beauties of form; but the freshness with which the poetic elevation of the style and the refined richness of the imagery are sustained through nearly the whole of this pastoral merits the highest praise. While almost without a trace of the affectation of archaic phraseology resembling that by means of which Spenser sought to tinge his *Shepherd's Kalendar* with a 'Doric' hue, this poem contains abundant instances of an observation of

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in act v. sc. 5, where a pretty quotation from *The Shepherd's Kalendar* is introduced into a song. The 'Tityrus' referred to (act v. sc. 3) seems, as Seward suggests, to be Chaucer (cf. the *Kalendar* again). I do not attach any special significance to the probability that Perigot's hand which 'will never scour' (act v. sc. 4) is a reminiscence of Lady Macbeth; but it is noteworthy that more than one reflex of the kind has been sought both in Fletcher's earliest and (if *The Woman-Hater* be such) in Beaumont's single independent dramatic work.

[1] *I. e.* as Dyce explains, not confined to particular persons, common.

nature close enough to give life and warmth to its colouring. Such passages as the opening lines of act v, and the closing speeches of the Satyr, are equally natural and elegant; and while wholly devoid of the moral grandeur of *Comus*, and in dramatic spirit inferior to Jonson's pastoral fragment, *The Faithful Shepherdess* remains, in even excellence of execution, without a rival among the examples preserved to us of the pastoral drama of the Elisabethan age. Very few green branches were put forth by that far from powerful growth; but this one at least is covered with the fairest of foliage.

(1) *Plays by Beaumont and Fletcher: Four Plays in One* (*pr.* 1647).

Note has already been taken of the special significance attaching to the combined series printed in the First Folio under the title of *Four Plays, or Morall Representations, in One*, from the point of view of an enquiry into the co-operation of Beaumont and Fletcher as dramatists. The date is unknown of the first performance of this series of short plays, preceded in the old-fashioned way[1] by an *Induction*; but there is at least an indication of its having been before the public as early as 1608[2]. The evidence of versification would certainly assign to Fletcher the latter two of the *Four Plays*—or, as they are severally termed, *Triumphs*; and this would naturally leave to Beaumont the first two, in which, as in the *Induction*, there is a considerable admixture of prose.

The practice of presenting on the same occasion several short plays in succession to one another—'in one,' as the term was, appears not to have been unusual; the object being doubtless, as Dyce suggests, to attract the theatrical public by means of a sort of variety which it has generally been wont to favour[3]. In the present instance the *Induction* supposes the plays to be presented in honour of the wedding of King Emmanuel of Portugal with the Infanta Isabella of Castile[1]—an event which took place in the year 1497. The Poet who speaks the *Prologue* promises 'four several Triumphs,' 'of Honour, Love, Death, and Time,'—which accordingly give their titles to the ensuing four plays. The use of these designations has been supposed to have been borrowed from Petrarch[2], but of course his *Trionfi* are not dramatic. The title of 'Triumphs' was, for the rest, common enough in quasi-dramatic entertainments of various descriptions in this country[3].

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[1] 'Inductions,' says the Prologue to *The Woman-Hater*, 'are out of date.'

[2] When *A Yorkshire Tragedy* was entered on the Registers as 'one of the Four Plays in One.' (See Fleay, *Englische Studien*, vol. ix. p. 14, and *English Drama*, vol. i. p. 179.) It will be obvious from my next note that the series referred to in the announcement need not be assumed to have been the particular series under discussion. I do not quite know how to reconcile the conjecture of Mr. Fleay's that such was the case, and that the reference was a bookseller's trick, with his argument *ib.* vol. ii. pp. 206–7, cited *ante*, p. 231 *note*.

[3] 'Four playes in one' are noted in Henslowe's *Diary* as performed

The first, *The Triumph of Honour*, is a sufficiently commonplace production: a story treated both by Boccaccio (*Decamerone*, x. 5) and from a British lay by Chaucer (in *The Frankelin's Tale*), who, at least in the matters of the heroine's name and of the miracle demanded by her, is directly followed in the drama. At its close occasion is taken for a pleasing protest against the Puritan incapacity to 'raise use' from poetry[4]. *The Triumph of Love* is a rather closer version of another story from the *Decamerone* (v. 7); and though the action has here to be helped on

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on March 6, 1591, and 'Five playes in one' on April 7 and 15, 1597. Collier cites two earlier instances of Five and Three Plays in One respectively. With the exception of the *Two Tragedies in One* ascribed to Robert Yarington, to which previous reference has been made, and which is printed in vol. iv of Mr. Bullen's Collection of *Old English Plays*, Beaumont and Fletcher's is, however, the only complete example of its kind extant; and we cannot therefore say whether it was usual to link the plays of such series together by an Induction.

[1] The historical Isabella, a daughter of Ferdinand the Catholic, was the widow of Alphonsus VI, Prince Royal of Portugal.

[2] They were imitated in the Spanish *Triunfos Morales* of Francisco de Guzman. (Ticknor, vol. iii. p. 61, *note*.)—One of Lope de Vega's plays is called the *Triunfo de la humildad*.

[3] Cf. vol. i. p. 148; vol. ii. p. 554, *note*, &c.

[4] 'What hurt's now in a play, 'gainst which some rail
So vehemently? thou and I, my love,
Make excellent use, methinks. . . .
. . . .
. . . . Sweet poetry's
A flower, where men, like bees and spiders, may
Bear poison, or else sweets and wax, away:
Be venom-bearing spiders they that will;
I'll be the bee, and suck the honey still.'

by two elaborate dumb-shows, and is moreover in part extremely ill-suited for representation on the stage, the little piece contains passages of a sweetness so natural as to have exercised an irresistible attraction upon Charles Lamb[1], whose sure instinct attributed it to Beaumont only. *The Triumph of Death*, founded on a novel by Bandello (i. 42), 'cruddles' into its narrow compass an amount of passion and crime which would fill a tragedy. But the concluding *Triumph of Time* fails to present any contrast, either invigorating or consoling, to these pictures of human agony. It is nothing more than a frigid and commonplace allegory about Anthropos and his false and true friends; differing merely by the superior excellence of the writing and versification from the common run of the later moralities. Its origin seems traceable to Lucian's dialogue of *Timon*, perhaps through an earlier adaptation[2]. Plutus, the god of riches, whom Time, with his assistants Industry, the Arts and Labour, brings to the succour of Anthropos, has his dwelling in 'a wild Indian region'—*i. e.* in that Dorado towards which the age of Beaumont and Fletcher had not ceased to cast wistful eyes.

The Scornful Lady (pr. 1616).

The Scornful Lady, first printed in 1616 with Fletcher's name only, was in the edition of 1625 and the numerous subsequent editions set down as the composition of both authors. There can be no doubt as to the correctness of this assumption, although the metrical evidence tells strongly in favour of a predominance on the part of Fletcher. The comedy must have been produced before 1609, for the Cleves war is alluded to in this play; indeed the phrase in question seems to imply that it had been in progress for some time[3].

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[1] See his *Specimens*, pp. 293, 294.—Koeppel, p. 50, compares the *dénouement* of the serious underplot in Dekker's *Satiromastix*.

[2] Cf. Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. ii. pp. 180 and 287. Mr. Fleay thinks it possible that *Time's Triumph*, acted in 1597, was in substance the Dialogue published by Heywood in 1637 under the title of *Misanthropos* (*ante*, p. 585).

[3] See act v. sc. 4: 'When you can hold out no longer, marry some last Cleve captain.' The war concerning the succession to the duchies of Juliers, Cleves and Berg arrived at a 'provisional' termination in 1614, though as a matter of fact it was protracted as part of the general European war.—Mr. Fleay, however, sees reason for thinking that the play was produced as early as 1609.

Among modern critics there seems to be an agreement of opinion that both authors took part in the composition of this very popular play, which was frequently reprinted [1]. The general basis of its action is that of an undying exemplar, the *Adelphi* of Terence [2]; but, though written with much spirit, the play is coarse in both design and texture, and seems hardly entitled to rank high among English comedies. The personages are devoid of the natural force which is so frequently to be found in the humorous characters of Fletcher. The 'Scornful Lady' is a shrewish coquette, brought to compliance at last by a trick; her lovers are uninteresting; and the minor personages are mere reproductions of ordinary stage-types, with the exception perhaps of the steward Savil, easily seduced from a Malvolio-like preciseness into a rapid course of apprenticeship to vice [3]. The younger Loveless's attendant captain is, as Dyce points out, a very indifferent imitation of Ancient Pistol; the usurer, the chaplain, and Abigail Younglove, who consoles herself with his hand, stand convicted of numerous counterparts on the stage.

A very different imaginative sphere surrounds the two plays which next call for mention, and in which I see no reason to doubt that both poets had a share.

Philaster (*pr.* 1620).

Philaster, or, Love Lies a Bleeding, was first printed (in a copy now excessively rare) in 1620, with the names of 'Francis Baymont and John Fletcher.' It is referred to by name in an *Epigram* addressed to 'the well-deserving John Fletcher' by Davies of Hereford in *The Scourge of Folly*[1], which is usually dated 1611. In the face of such testimony, quite apart from Dryden's assertion that *Philaster* was the first success of the pair of poets, it seems useless to raise doubts as to Fletcher's having had a part in the play; moreover, the evidence of versification cannot be said with certainty to confine this part to the last act[2]. It must however be allowed to be unlikely that his share in the composition of any other part of the play was considerable.

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[1] A droll, entitled *The False Heir and Formal Curate*, taken from this comedy, was printed by Kirkman in 1672; the play itself was revived after the Restoration, when Pepys saw it not less than four times; and it made its appearance on the stage as late as 1783, in an adaptation by W. Cooke, entitled *The Capricious Lady*, of which three editions were printed in the same year.—*The Scornful Lady*, though frequently reprinted, has a carelessly edited text, 'plain staring blank verse,' in Coleridge's words, appearing as prose.

[2] This original may likewise have suggested the conversion of the usurer Morecraft to prodigality.—The amusing scene (act ii. sc. 2) in which the Younger Loveless receives with perfect resignation the news imparted by the Elder of his death, reminds Dr. Koeppel of a scene in *The London Prodigal*, between which and a well-known scene in *The School for Scandal* the resemblance has been noted above (*ante*, p. 229).

[3] The steward Savil, according to Addison's own statement, was the original of Vellum in his farce of *The Drummer*.

The success of *Philaster* seems to have been remarkably continuous[3]. The main cause for so unusual and enduring a popularity must lie in the exquisite pathos of the principal situations and characters of this play, and in the adequacy of the style to the matter. I am further, though in opposition to the view of Dyce[4], inclined to regard the plot as not less naturally than perspicuously constructed, and fully answering the demands of dramatic probability.

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[1] '*Love lies ableeding* . . . .
. . . .
For this I love thee, and can doe no lesse
For thine as faire as *Faithfull Shepherdesse*.'

(*Epigram*, No. 206. Grosart's edition, vol. i. p. 31.)

[2] See E. H. Oliphant, *u. s.*, vol. xiv. pp. 89 *seqq.*, where the attempt to give the whole credit of the play to Beaumont seems to me well refuted.

[3] This is shown by the editions published both before and during the suppression of the stage; by the performance, during the latter period, of a droll called *The Club Men*, reproducing a scene (act v. sc. 4) which must have particularly commended itself to the popular critics of a military rule; by the revival of the play after the Restoration, when a doggrel ballad on the story of its plot was in circulation, and when Pepys, recording on May 30, 1668, his presence at a performance of it, recalled with wonderment the circumstance that as a boy he 'was to have acted' the part of Arethusa at Sir Robert Cooke's; by various subsequent revisions of it, and by its inclusion in modern educational literature. Among the adaptations are Elkanah Settle's, who re-wrote the last two acts (1695); George Villiers Duke of Buckingham's, who brought it out as a tragi-comedy under the taking title of *The Restauration, or Right will take Place* (1714), and the elder Colman's (first printed 1763). According to Genest, vol. viii. p. 698, *Philaster* was acted at Bath as late as 1817.

[4] See his General Introduction, p. xxix, where he partially adopts the judgment of Hallam, whose opinion on literary matters I should be sorry to treat with the contempt which recent writers have taught themselves to think its due.

The directness and simplicity of the diction in passages of high dramatic importance[1] implies that this play as a whole was composed under the influence of a true artistic inspiration.

The characters of Philaster and Arethusa are alike admirably drawn, though in the former it is impossible not to recognise a weakened adaptation of the character of Hamlet. But the resemblance—which is one of situation chiefly, and striking enough in the first scene[2]—wears off, as the plot takes an independent developement; and the reader's sympathy is recovered for the hero in a wholly original manner. It is however neither to Philaster nor to the wronged princess that the interest principally attaches, but to the character of Euphrasia-Bellario, upon which the authors have expended the whole wealth of their pathetic power. The figure of the maiden-page, with whom the audience have been familiarised before her appearance on the scene by means of a narrative passage[3], which could not be wished shorter by a line. maintains to the last a simple sweetness full of the truest poetical pathos. Shakspere's Viola may have suggested the first idea of the relation between Bellario and the lovers; or Beaumont and Fletcher may have derived it directly from Montemayor. The general conception is one familiar to the whole course of the Elisabethan drama, without of course being confined to this branch of poetic fiction. Indeed some have thought the character of Bellario borrowed from that of Daïphantus in the Second Book of Sidney's *Arcadia*. But in *Philaster*, as compared with other dramatic works, including *Twelfth Night*, the self-sacrifice of love is surpassingly intense and full. Yet such are the exigencies of dramatic construction that we remain only half contented by the close, where the sweet Euphrasia is left as it were uncared-for in the consummation of Philaster's happiness. Perhaps a consolation should have been found for her—in death; in which case the parallel to Daïphantus would have become complete.

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[1] *E.g.* act iii. sc. 1; and more especially the singularly effective dialogue in act v. sc. 2.

[2] The King's speech (act ii. sc. 4), as already Theobald noted, forcibly recalls that of Claudius in *Hamlet* (act iii. sc. 3).—A passage in act iv. sc. 3 ('The gods take part against me,' &c.) has, as Steevens pointed out, a close parallel in *Cymbeline* (Iachimo's speech in act v. sc. 3). Other resemblances have been traced with more or less evident success (see Koeppel, p. 37 and *note*).

[3] 'I have a boy,' &c. (act i. sc. 2).

The merits of this play are by no means restricted to its beauties of detail, which are too many for enumeration[1]. Considerable vigour of characterisation is apparent even in less important personages, such as Dion, and there is a free play of humour in the scenes between Pharamond the bragging Spanish prince[2] and the frail Court ladies, and in the address of the old Captain to his 'brave myrmidons,' the revolutionary citizens[3].

The Maid's Tragedy (pr. 1619).

The Maid's Tragedy (of which the first extant edition was printed in 1619) was, as there seems good reason to conclude, produced not later than 1610–11[4]; nor can it be doubted that both dramatists had a share in it, although the greater was probably Beaumont's[1]. This tragedy enjoyed a very high popularity till the time of the closing of the theatres, and a comic extract from it was afterwards performed as a droll under the title of *The Testy Lord*. Under Charles II the performance of it was prohibited, for reasons which must be left to conjecture; but it was acted in the latter part of that reign as originally written[2]. On the other hand, there seems to be no evidence of any actual stage performance of the play with Waller's namby-pamby alteration of the last act, although this is stated to have been made 'to please the Court[3].' *The Maid's Tragedy* appears to have been reproduced on the boards at intervals till the middle of last century, and was revived there, adapted by a modern dramatic author, within the memory of our own times [1].

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[1] I instance one, in order to direct attention once more to the extreme simplicity of the diction:

'*Phi.* Oh, but thou dost not know
What 'tis to die.
Bel. Yes, I do know, my lord:
'Tis less than to be born; a lasting sleep,
A quiet resting from all jealousy,
A thing we all pursue; I know, besides,
It is but giving over of a game
That must be lost.' (Act iii. sc. 2.)

[2] His 'speech calls him Spaniard, being nothing but a large inventory of his own commendations.' (Act i. sc. 1.)

[3] Act v. sc. 4. Dramatic propriety seems however violated in the way in which the King's inability to meet the rebellion is depicted in the preceding scene. ('Oh, my wits, my wits!')

[4] A play called *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*, preserved in a MS. without the title-page, and wildly attributed by an annotator to various authors, including Shakspere, was licensed in 1611. (It was first printed in vol. i. of *The Old English Drama*, 1825.) Except that the subject is again the guilty passion of a tyrant, this play bears no resemblance to Beaumont and Fletcher's tragedy; so far as the character of the heroine is concerned, the *Second Tragedy* is more appropriately named than the first. (See, however, below.) Mr. Fleay (*English Drama*, vol. ii. p. 330), who considers that Cyril Tourneur was the author of this play, holds that its original title was *The Usurping Tyrant*, and that the new (old) title was substituted by the Master of the Revels, who had just licensed *The Maid's Tragedy. The Second Maiden's Tragedy* is of an extremely sensational description; the tyrant's passion giving no rest to its victim even after death.—Cf. as to this play Professor R. Sachs in *Jahrbuch*, vol. xxvii (1892), pp. 194–5, where is noted the translation of it by Tieck, who thought it identifiable with Massinger's lost play, *The Tyrant*.

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[1] Mr. Fleay and Mr. Boyle ascribe to him more than three-fourths of the text, and Mr. Oliphant still further contracts Fletcher's supposed share in it.

[2] Colley Cibber, in his *Apology*, mentions the Lord Chamberlain's prohibition as a common tradition; but Fenton, in his *Observations on Waller's Poems*, states that the play was acted in its original form at the Theatre Royal in the latter part of Charles II's reign. Cibber rejects the notion that King Charles should have been moved to issuing the prohibition by any qualms concerning such portions of the play as he might have thought applicable to his own affairs, and prefers to accept the story that it was due to the 'Killing of the King'—an intolerable suggestion, 'while the tragical Death of King Charles the First was then so fresh in People's Memory.' It may, at the same time, be observed that kings are killed in several other plays acted in this reign, and that no such pointed analogy of situation is to be found in *The Maid's Tragedy* as would account for its having been singled out for prohibition. On the other hand, without following Cibber in his attempt to discriminate nicely between points of likeness and unlikeness, one may allow that this tragedy contained enough to have touched whatever sense of shame may have lingered in Charles II—even though the atmosphere of the play, as Mr. Macaulay effectively shows, is manifestly that of the period in which it was first produced. The prohibition, if ever imposed, was not in operation in 1666 or early in 1667, when Pepys saw the play performed at the King's House. (See his *Diary* under December 7th and February 18th. On the second occasion he was much distracted by overhearing the conversation of Sir Charles Sedley, even when it consisted of 'very pretty' 'exceptions against both words and pronouncing.' Sir Charles' exceptions are not reported to have gone further.)

[3] Dyce quotes quite enough of Waller's innovations; the act written by him was in rime. See Genest, vol. i. p. 337. A copy of Waller's *The Maid's Tragedy altered* (1690) is in the Dyce Library. A Prologue and two Epilogues (showing that he altered the catastrophe of the play twice) are printed among his *Poems*.

Opinions have differed widely among both earlier and later critics as to the merits of this tragedy [2]; but I have no hesitation in following those who assign to it a very high, if not the highest, rank among the tragic efforts of its authors. The character of Evadne is conceived and drawn with singular power, yet not carried beyond natural bounds. Recklessness of pride has brought about her first fall; she scorns to be loved by any but a king, and in her sinful ambition she consents to screen her guilt by a marriage shamefully contrived by her paramour. She heartlessly constrains her husband to second this vile scheme, but she is cast in too grand a mould to carry out her part in the arrangement. When at last a spirit as fearless as her own is brought face to face with her shame, her brother's unflinching determination moves her guilty soul to the resolution of taking vengeance on her seducer. The scene in which she wreaks this vengeance is written with startling power [3]; and her own violent end is in thorough consonance with the whole line of conduct into which she had at first been driven by a fierce gust of passion. Yet—and here the dramatic art of the character makes itself manifest—this picture, terrible as it is, never becomes monstrous, and Evadne is not only actually, but dramatically, a possible woman.

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[1] Sheridan Knowles' adaptation, under the title of *The Bridal*, was produced by the late Mr. Macready in 1837, and has I understand been occasionally performed at more recent dates. The 'additions' of Sheridan Knowles to this play were no doubt partly intended to 'write up' the character of Melantius, acted by Macready.

[2] Among the former Rymer, in his *Tragedies of the Last Age*, violently attacked it. *Inter alia*, he appears to have objected to the title as having reference to the distress of Aspatia, although only a secondary personage in the piece. If, however, we may trust an extract quoted by Dyce from Cunningham's *Extracts from the Accounts of the Revels at Court*, the title which it there bears of *The proud Mayds Tragedie*, would certainly show that it relates not to Aspatia, but to Evadne, though if so the title cannot be averred to be happily chosen. But, in point of fact, the Elisabethan dramatists had not taught themselves to be very careful in the choice of titles for their plays.—Of modern critics Hazlitt has judged this tragedy with much acerbity; and even Donne appears to think it has been overpraised. I wonder that he should not have done ampler justice to the power shown in the character of Evadne.

[3] A not dissimilar scene occurs in Friedrich Hebbel's interesting tragedy of *Judith* (1839).

Like, and yet unlike, to her is her brother Melantius, a character drawn like her own, with striking consistency and power. Few better types are to be found in the Elisabethan drama of the heroic soldier, jealous of his honour and faithful as a friend,—a man of acts rather than of words, unflinching in pursuit of his purpose, but big of heart withal. By the side of Melantius the unhappy Amintor plays but a sorry part; yet our interest in him is unmistakeably sustained by the tact with which we are led to compassionate the ineffable piteousness of his position. Amintor's sense of the 'divinity' encircling the King which 'strikes dead' his rising wrath wears an aspect of reality even to the modern reader, who, if less powerfully impressed, would resent it as a sham[1]. On the other hand, it is difficult to regard the character of Aspatia as pre-eminently successful, or as entitled to rank near so lovely a conception as that of Bellario, notwithstanding the pathos of the scene near the close of the play, where she re-appears to seek and find death from the hands of the unwitting Amintor,—although even here her insistence is not I think altogether pleasingly managed[2]. And I confess that the lamentations of the wronged maiden in the first and second acts are to my mind lengthy. The lascivious King, and the talkative coward Calianax—in some respects a likeness, but in no respects a copy, of Polonius—are admirably effective characters; and the humour of the scene is irresistible in which the coolness of Melantius outwits the unhappy old courtier[1].

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[1] The passage referred to (act iii. sc. 1) seems a reminiscence of *Hamlet*; but it must be remembered how obvious the sentiment seemed to the age; so that critics need hardly have resolved upon treating it as a special 'note' of Beaumont.—*The Maid's Tragedy* contains another passage which may appear a reminiscence from *Hamlet* ('but they that are above Have ends in everything,' act v. sc. 4); but here again it would be absurd to speak of plagiarism. The scene between Melantius and Amintor (act iii. sc. 2), on the other hand, resembles passages between Brutus and Cassius in *Julius Caesar* too strikingly to allow us to regard the coincidence as fortuitous. Cf. *ante*, p. 138.

[2] See act v. sc. 4. But her death is extremely touching:

> 'Give me thy hand; mine hands grope up and down,
> And cannot find thee; I am wondrous sick:
> Have I thy hand, Amintor?'

But the great power of characterisation displayed in this tragedy is not more remarkable than the simple strength, often finding expression in pregnant brevity, of much of its dialogue[2]. In the first act a masque is introduced—perhaps by way of an afterthought—which is distinguished by considerable beauty of diction[3].

A King and No King (*pr.* 1619).

A King and No King, of which the first edition, published in 1619, was followed by several other early quartos, was licensed in 1611, and is undoubtedly a joint production of both authors. Earle, in his lines *On John Beaumont*, purporting to have been written 'presently after his death,' demands where may be 'such humour as thy Bessus'; on the other hand, Herrick in his verses 'upon Mr. Fletcher's incomparable plays,' expressly assigns to him its 'rare plot.' The character of the verse indicates that Fletcher's writing was mainly confined to the last two acts. The play was very popular both before and after the Restoration, but the revival of it in more recent times has not proved successful[4].

No blame need be visited on a later generation for having refused to applaud so unhealthy, though in many respects brilliant, a production. The motive of the plot remains monstrous under the most poetic treatment,—such as has been more than once applied to it [1],—and in the present instance is not redeemed by the anticlimax which is supposed to put things right [2]. Arbaces, King of Iberia, entertains a seemingly incestuous love for his supposed sister Panthea, which she, though less ardently, returns. In the end it is discovered that they are not brother and sister (and he no King), so that their union not only becomes possible, but furnishes the solution of the knot. The immorality of the idea of such a plot lies elsewhere than in the circumstances of the passion to which the hero of the play for a long time guiltily gives way. Revolting as these may be, they are not dramatically unwarrantable, provided that the wrong brings its punishment with it—'la règle,' as it has been well put by an eminent French critic, 'se retrouve par le remords [3];' and *Phèdre* and other plays of the same description, though hovering on a dangerous brink, have been saved by virtue of the moral balance preserved in them by the author. But no moral recovery takes place where a consciously intended wrong becomes an actual right; nor is the morally guilty passion of Arbaces and Panthea purified *ex-post-facto* by the discovery that they might have entertained it without offending against divine or human law.

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[1] See act iv. sc. 2. At the close Calianax confesses that he takes it

'unkindly that mine enemy
Should use me so extraordinarily scurvily.'

(Is not this a Fletcherian effort of metrification?)

[2] See in particular the first part of the dialogue between Amintor and Evadne, act ii. sc. 1; that between Evadne and the King, act iii. sc. 1; and that between Evadne and Melantius, act iv. sc. 1.

[3] Mr. Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. i. pp. 192-3, offers some ingenious conjectures as to the date (1612) at which he supposes this masque to have been inserted in the play. A passage in it is thought to have suggested the line—

'Stoop thy pale visage through an amber cloud'—

in Milton's *Comus*.

[4] When revived in an adapted form in 1778 it was not well enough received for its performance to be repeated. See Genest, vol. vi. p. 490. Garrick had intended to have revived it at an earlier date; 'but it was observed,' says Davies, 'that at every reading of it in the green-room, his pleasure suffered a visible diminution—at length he fairly gave up his design.' Dryden, in the *Preface* to *Troilus and Cressida*, speaks of *A King and No King* as the 'best' of its authors' designs, 'the most approaching to antiquity and the most conducing to pity'; but allows that its plot is faulty.

This remarkable play has another radical fault. The overbearing pride of the King as exhibited in the earlier scenes of the play not only goes far to alienate all sympathy from him at the outset, but trenches closely on the border of the comic [4]. Psychologically, Arbaces is in all probability not untruthfully conceived; but he cannot be regarded as a tragic hero worthily sustained from first to last.

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[1] Cf. Ford's *'Tis Pity she's a Whore*, and Byron's *Manfred*.

[2] And which enables Mr. Swinburne to assert triumphantly that the play is *not* founded on an incestuous passion.

[3] Saint-Marc Girardin, *De la nature de l'émotion dramatique*, in *Cours de Littérature Dramatique*, i. 5. I notice that in a paper by Mr. L. M. Griffiths entitled *Shakespearian Qualities of 'A King and No King'* (reprinted from *Poet-Lore* for April, 1891), it is contended that the purity of the behaviour of Arbaces and Panthea in act iv. sc. 4 reconciles us to their happy union, after they have been proved to be no blood-relations.

[4] Hazlitt seems to think this a merit; and suggests that 'perhaps this display of upstart pride was meant by the authors as an oblique satire on Arbaces' low origin, which is afterwards discovered.' This is quite unlikely.

With these important cavils, it must be conceded that not only is this play written with extraordinary spirit in all its parts—the characters of Mardonius, one of those plain-spoken warriors whom Beaumont and Fletcher loved to draw, and of the cowardly captain Bessus, with his 'two sword-men' tutors in the noble art of finding reasons for refusing challenges[1], are alike admirable—but that in its passionate love-passages it is full of force and fire. Indeed, the growth of the passion of Arbaces is depicted with terrific power; we see him at first overcome by it as by a supernatural presence[2], then miserably striving to overcome it with the aid of all the forces of his better nature, and finally abandoning the endeavour to resist. But, as already observed, such a struggle ought to have ended in one way and no other,—in the vindication of Law, not in a remedy due to accident. The dramatic power shown in this play, however, sustains it to the last; and while reprobating both from a moral and from an artistic point of view the nature of the solution, we feel that rarely has joy been more vividly depicted than in the last scene, where Arbaces finds himself delivered from the unutterable oppression of a criminal passion, and at the same time free to indulge a lawful love.

It may seem strange that highly-wrought dramas of so intense a power as is recognisable in the foregoing should have been succeeded by a mock reproduction of an earlier and cruder type of play; but there is nothing inexplicable in the fact, if it be such. In truth, however, the precise order of succession can hardly be determined between these plays, and that which I proceed to notice may have been written just before, instead of after, one or more of those to which it seemed on the whole preferable to give priority.

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[1] Bessus is beyond doubt indebted to Falstaff not only for the suggestion of the opening of his soliloquy (act iii. sc. 2) on the value of fame, but also for the criticism on his suffering himself to be kicked: 'It showed discretion, the best part of valour.' (Koeppel, p. 45.)

[2] See act iii. sc. 1:

'What art thou, that dost creep into my breast,
And dar'st not see my face? show forth thyself.
I feel a pair of fiery wings display'd
Hither, from thence. You shall not tarry there;
Up, and begone; if thou be'st love, begone!' &c.

The Knight of the Burning Pestle (*pr.* 1613).

The Knight of the Burning Pestle is, in the dedication prefixed by the publisher to the first edition, 1613, stated to have been in his hands for two years, after having been sent to him as 'an infant.' There is no sufficient reason for rejecting the ascription of it to both Beaumont and Fletcher in the two editions of 1635; and in view of the fact that this play contains a large element of prose, and more especially of its diction and versification, as well as of its general texture, which bears what the aforesaid publisher terms 'the privy mark of irony' upon it, we may set down as futile all attempts to place it to the credit of one of the two dramatists to the exclusion of the other[1]. The further statement of the publisher that this piece was produced in a term of eight days—like Goethe's *Clavigo*—is, considering the nature of the piece, by no means astonishing, and hardly worth dragging into the controversy.

It is impossible to fix upon the precise origin of the conception of this mock-heroic drama, the ancestor of a long line of similar productions. It might have been suggested to the authors by any of the numerous specimens of the literary *pabulum* on which the self-complacency of the citizens of London, a natural object of satire to 'gentlemen readers,' loved to sustain itself. The ballad of *The Honour of a London Prentice*, in which the hero does execution far away in Turkey among the lions, was doubtless known to the two dramatists[2], as of course were the plays to be immediately noticed. But, at all events in its extant form, there can be no doubt that the play was written under the immediate influence of *Don Quixote*, of which the publisher's dedication describes it as the 'elder above a year.' This must refer to the English translation of the *First Part* by Thomas Shelton, which after having remained unpublished for four or five years was printed in 1612; but the same portion of the Spanish original had been before the world since 1605. The special purpose of the authors of this burlesque drama was to apply Cervantes' satire against chivalry out of date to the comic military ardour of the citizens of London, while simultaneously ridiculing the favourite romantic dramas by which that sentiment was so affectionately fed. To some of these dramas references or allusions are made in the course of the Induction and action. Thomas Heywood, as has been seen, was the author of several plays of this description, among which *Jane Shore*, *The Life and Death of Sir Thomas Gresham* (*i.e. If You Know not Me*, Part II), and more especially *The Four Prentices of London*, are, together with *The Bold Beauchamps*, here incidentally satirised. *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* is however no mere parody of any particular piece, but a burlesque of an entire species[1], as well as a diverting attempt to turn into ridicule the romantic and military tastes of the citizens for the diversion of the 'gentlemen sitting on stools upon the stage.' It is easy to understand why, as the dedication confesses, this dramatic satire should have met with an unfavourable reception when first produced in a public theatre, although the plays seems to have been well received a generation later, and again on its revival in the Restoration days, when a new Prologue (instead of that of 1635 stolen from Lyly's *Sapho and Phao*) was spoken by 'Mrs. Ellen Guin.' In the interval the city train-bands had vindicated their honour to some purpose from the ridicule cast in this play on their manœuvres at Mile-End.

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[1] Mr. Macaulay, pp. 153–4, suggests that the purpose of the play, the sole authorship of which he attributes to Beaumont, was to take vengeance upon the 'mechanic judgment of citizens' for the rejection of his friend's *Faithful Shepherdess*. But there is really nothing to support this conjecture.

[2] It is cited by Dr. B. Leonhardt in his reply in *Englische Studien*, vol. xii (1889), to a review by Professor M. Koch in the same journal, vol. ix (1886), of his essay on *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (Annaberg, 1855). Both papers are of interest. Dr. Leonhardt considers that the Citizen's Wife alludes to the ballad in the *Induction*: 'Let him Kill a lion with a Pestle, husband! let him Kill a lion with a Pestle!'

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[1] Ben Jonson, in *The Magnetic Lady* (act i. *ad fin.*), admirably hits off the construction of this kind of drama, whose popularity by the bye is of far too robust a nature to have suffered from any satire, old or modern: 'So, if a child could be born in a play, and grow up to be a man, in the first scene, before he went off the stage: and then after to come forth a squire, and be made a knight: and that knight to travel between the acts, and do wonders in the Holy Land, or elsewhere; kill Paynims, wild boars, dun cows, and other monsters; beget him a reputation, and marry an emperor's daughter for his mistress; convert her father's country; and at last come home lame, and all-to-be-laden with miracles.'

A very amusing Induction lets the reader at once into the secret of the fun of the piece. An entertainment is set on foot in the presence of a citizen-grocer and his wife, who, beginning with the title, accompany with their comments—which are highly diverting—and with something more than comments, the progress of the drama[1]. Their special interest is devoted to the performance of their apprentice Ralph, whom they have foisted on to the stage to enact the hero. From his concluding recital of his achievements the general character of the burlesque may be gathered; the truculent giant Barbarossa is a barber, whose patients are rescued from medical treatment by the hero. The speech specially parodied is that of the ghost of Andrea in *The Spanish Tragedy*[2]. The humour of the conception

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[1] This device, together with a couple of speeches, was borrowed from *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* by Settle in his *City Ramble, or, A Play-house Wedding* (1710), where *The Coxcomb* was likewise put under contribution. Cf. Genest, vol. ii. p. 482.—Beaumont and Fletcher's play is referred to by Glapthorne in his *Wit in a Constable* (act ii. sc. 1), and in R. Brome's *Sparagus Garden*, act iii. sc. 2. The latter was printed in 1635.

[2] Act v. sc. 3: 'Enter Ralph, with a forked arrow through his head.

Ralph. When I was mortal, this my costive corps
Did lap up figs and raisins in the Strand.
Where sitting, I espied a lovely dame,
Whose master wrought with lingel and with awl,
And underground he vampèd many a boot.
Straight did her love prick forth me, tender sprig,
To follow feats of arms in warlike wise
Through Waltham-desert; where I did perform
Many achievements, and did lay on ground
Huge Barbarossa, that insulting giant,
And all his captives set at liberty.
Then honour prick'd me from my native soil
Into Moldavia, where I gain'd the love
Of Pompiona, his belovèd daughter;
And yet prov'd constant to the black-thumb'd maid
Susan, and scornèd Pompiona's love;
Yet liberal I was, and gave her pins,
And money for her father's officers.
I then returnèd home, and thrust myself
In action, and by all men chosen was
Lord of the May, where I did flourish it
With scarfs and rings, and posy in my hand.
After this action I preferrèd was,

is kept up with great spirit through the piece; the Quixotic colloquies between the Knight and his Squire whom he seeks to habituate to chivalrous phraseology, and between the Knight and mine host of the Bell Inn, who though addressed as a knight persistently returns to the figure of his bill, are especially amusing; and a foil to this grandiloquence is skilfully provided in the boisterous mirth of citizen Merrythought, whose lyrics, borrowed or original, form a choice Bacchanalian anthology. But it may be worth while to point out that where in the course of the action feminine devotion is introduced as a motive, it would be difficult to say whose manner is so closely imitated as that of Beaumont and Fletcher themselves—so much so that, if transposed into a serious drama, the speeches of Luce might be fairly quoted as examples of Fletcher's fluent pathos[1].

The Coxcomb (*pr.* 1647).

In *The Coxcomb* (first printed, so far as is known, in the Folio of 1647, but performed at Court in 1612 and 1613, and possibly produced earlier) Beaumont and Fletcher, if they were both concerned in it, blended their respective contributions with more than usual completeness; and this remarkable play furnishes a good example of the difficulty of attempting an exact assignment between them. A third

And chosen city-captain at Mile-End,
With hat and feather, and with leading-staff,
And train'd my men, and brought them off all clear.'

He then relates the cruel way in which he was brought to his death, and bids farewell to all the good boys in merry London:

'Set up a stake, oh, never more I shall!
I die! fly, fly, my soul, to Grocers' Hall!
Oh, oh, oh, &c. [*Dies.*'

As commonly occurs when the rein is given to the humour of parody, the authors, as they proceed, cease to care when and what they burlesque. Master Humfrey's long good-night at the close of act ii. sc. 1, may be to the address of Juliet; such jests are not worth examining closely. Some of the rimes in the dialogue are of Hudibrastic excellence; especially

'were I good Sir Bevis,
I would not stay his coming by your leavès.' (Act iii. sc. 1.)

[1] See act iii. sc. 1; act iv. sc. 4.—On the other hand, Beaumont might have owned the authorship of such a passage (quite above the level of burlesque) as this, in act ii. sc. 3:

'I am as you are, lady; so are they;
All mortal.'

hand has accordingly been suspected; and Mr. Fleay, who formerly admitted this play into the canon, now considers that the extant copy is a revision prepared for a revival in 1636 by Massinger. The Prologue, certainly written for a revival, states that fault was found with the play because of its length,—'but that fault's reformed.'

The two plots contained in this romantic comedy have but little mutual connexion. That with which the personage is concerned, from whom the play derives its name—something of a euphemism[1]—and which ought therefore perhaps to be called the main-plot, seems to have been suggested by the well-known story in *Don Quixote* of the *Curioso Impertinente*, not long before made more widely known through a French translation[2]. This portion of the play, where the offensiveness of a story more or less suited to the depravity of the age is not mitigated by any subtlety of treatment, is fortunately altogether overshadowed by a second plot of singular interest. Viola, a sweet and pure maiden—unless the jewels which she takes with her from her father's be placed to her discredit—arranges to elope with her lover at midnight. But he dallies over his cups, and when he issues forth from the tavern with his drunken companions, reels past her in brutal ignorance of her identity[3]. The agony of his remorse goes some way towards atoning for his guilt[4]; and in the adventures of the desolate girl, and the quest for her carried on by her lover and her father, lies the absorbing interest of the action. The figure of Viola is drawn with much sweetness and pathos[1], while considerable constructive skill is shown in the turns of the story which bear her through her perils and at last safe into her penitent lover's arms. Some of the personages with whom she is brought into contact are truthfully sketched in,—thus in particular the two rustic milkmaids and the busy, scolding housewife, the latter a lasting type of homely human nature. A pompous, blundering justice, singly intent upon 'law having her course,' helps to wind up the twofold argument[2].

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[1] It ought, if named after him, to have been called *The Wittol.*

[2] See Koeppel, pp. 52-3; and cf. Tickner, vol. ii. p. 119, where the *Curioso Impertinente*, first printed in Part i. of *Don Quixote* in 1605, is stated to have been printed in 1608 without the author's name at Paris, then for public reasons much interested in things Spanish.

[3] This scene (act i. sc. 6), where a watch is of course introduced, is one of the most realistic drunken scenes in English comedy. Of the four tipsy companions one enquires: 'How many is there on's?' 'About five,' is the answer. 'Why then, let's fight, three to three.'

[4] How charming is her lament (act iii. sc. 3):

'I'll sit me down and weep;
All things have cast me from 'em but the earth.
The evening comes, and every little flower
Droops now, as well as I.'

Plays usually ascribed to Beaumont and Fletcher conjointly.

With regard to the group of plays to be mentioned next, the more general opinion has favoured the tradition of their having been jointly composed by Beaumont and Fletcher; and it seems to me at least premature to treat a different conclusion as definitively established.

Cupid's Revenge (*pr.* 1615).

Cupid's Revenge was first acted in 1612, and afterwards several times repeated at Court, where the artificiality of its scheme—a kind of tragical topsy-turveydom due to supernatural influence—was *a priori* likely to find favour. It was first printed in 1615, with Fletcher's name only; but in the second (or third?) edition Beaumont's name was added. There are certainly traces of alterations in the text of this play[3]; but it seems to me hazardous to attempt to prove that it was revised by Massinger, of whose co-operation with Fletcher—indeed of whose activity as a dramatic author—no external evidence is traceable to so early a date. The hypothesis seems still more doubtful, that Massinger was assisted in it by Field and possibly by yet another writer[4]. A droll called *The Loyal Citizens* was founded on this piece, which was revived after the Restoration, under the name of *Love Despised*[5].

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[1] See in especial her preparations for her son's return home (act iv. sc. 3). One of her servants angrily asserts of her (act v. sc. 3):

> 'The devil a good word will she give a servant;
> That 's her old rule; and God be thankèd, they 'll
> Give her as few; there is perfect love on both sides.'

[2] *The Coxcomb* was performed in the Inner Temple Hall by the Elisabethan Stage Society, on February 10 and 11, 1898.

[3] See Mr. Fleay's clever argument, *u. s.*, vol. i. pp. 187-8.

[4] See Mr. E. H. Oliphant, *u. s.*, p. 84.

[5] See Pepys' *Diary*, August 17, 1668, where the play is temperately

The title and general idea of this play, together with some of its details of the plot, were suggested by the story of Erona in the *Second Book* of Sidney's *Arcadia*,—while the names of Leucippus and Bacha, and the relation between them, are taken from another passage in the same *Book*. Now. this general idea consists in the revenge taken by the god Cupid for the overthrowing of his images throughout the kingdom or duchy of Leontius at the desire of his daughter Hidaspes, seconded by that of her brother Leucippus. The King's servants rudely stop the rites of the god[1], whose revenge begins at once by Hidaspes falling in love perforce with her father's dwarf. The unhappy object of her infatuation is put to death, and she breathes her last, while her attendants offer up prayers for pardon to the offended deity. But his wrath likewise descends upon her brother, the noble Leucippus, who is seized by an unworthy passion for the widow Bacha. On its being discovered, he scorns to save his credit by betraying her real character. Hereupon, the aged King himself becomes enamoured of her fading charms, and, to the disgust of all good men and true among his subjects, marries her. Queen Bacha endeavours to lure back her stepson Leucippus, but sees her advances honourably rejected by him. She now breathes vengeance, and although the prince is saved from assassination by Bacha's own innocent daughter Urania, who in the disguise of a page has followed him into his refuge, the monstrous Queen slays him with her own hand. Little Urania and the dotard King having both been made away with, Cupid's revenge is complete.

Such a conception as this is I judge to be wholly out of accord with the laws that ought to govern the action of a modern tragedy. In a romantic comedy indeed—such as *A Midsummer Night's Dream*—the human personages may be represented as temporarily puppets moved by the will of supernatural agents; there, however, all ends happily, the phantasmagoria of the night having vanished with the return

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criticised as one 'that hath something very good in it, though I like not the whole body of it.'

[1] See act i. sc. 2, which contains a charming erotic.

of the sun. But to represent human action as due to the arbitrary decrees of a power like that of the Cupid of Beaumont and Fletcher's tragedy, is to mock the significance, in that human action which is mirrored by the stage, of the controlling idea of moral responsibility. Were the insult offered by Hidaspes and Leucippus to Cupid placed before us in the light of an act of human arrogance, a justification would be suggested for the retribution visited upon it. Of such a justification we are conscious even in the *Bacchae* of Euripides; in the English play, on the contrary, the intention is to awe us by means of a fiction intolerable when applied to morally responsible human beings. The effect of the play is therefore derived from a tainted source; and with all its vigour and vivacity, it must be condemned as founded on a basis essentially unsound.

The movement in this drama is however admirably lifelike; and attention may be specially directed to the lively humour of the scene of the citizens' revolt, where the tailor's valour is particularly diverting[1]. The notion of making the innocent Urania talk what one editor defines as 'a mixture of broad Scotch and Yorkshire'—dialects, by the bye, with which the idea of childlike simplicity is not usually connected —is singularly absurd. The sturdy faithfulness of Ismenus, on the other hand, forms the substance of an excellent scene[2].

The Captain (*pr.* 1647).

Of *The Captain*, which was performed at Court in 1612–3, no impression remains anterior to the First Folio. Two sets of commendatory verses speak of this play as Fletcher's only, and it cannot be said that any internal evidence in it specially points to Beaumont, who by 1613 may have ceased to write for the stage[3]. Massinger, who has been supposed to have assisted Fletcher in *The Captain*, cannot be proved to have become his collaborator at quite so early a date. The bulk of the play is in any event unmistakeably Fletcher's, and it seems to me hardly worth while to risk unsatisfactory conjectures as to the remainder: for the comedy as a whole has little merit. Its concluding lines declare it to be the intent of every noble action

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[1] Act iv. sc. 3. According to Mr. Fleay, *u. s.*, p. 187, the droll of *The Loyal Citizens* was founded upon this part of the play.

[2] Act iv. sc. 5.

[3] Mr. Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. i. p. 195, asserts that Beaumont ceased to do so in 1611. The Prologue, which speaks of the 'author' of this play, evidently refers to a revival; for perfection is here said not to be attainable 'in a week.' Cf. the same, in *Englische Studien*, vol. ix. p. 19.

> 'to give Worth reward, Vice punishment';

but if the same be the purpose of any drama which seeks faithfully to reflect the government of life by moral laws, no play has ever strayed further from the right path than this comedy. The dialogue contains some fine passages, and a few graceful lyrics are interspersed in it; but the entire play repels as the work of a perverted imagination. The character of Lelia is indescribably horrible, and the scene between her and her father belongs to the flora of utter corruption. Yet the wretched comedy-ending of a hurried marriage is allowed to patch up a plot that had been carried into depths which nothing short of the most deadly retribution could have fitly closed[1]. Captain Jacomo, from whom the play takes its title, is a far from pleasing type of the blunt soldier who hates 'peace and perry' and female society, and who can hardly be said to deserve the good fortune that falls to his lot. Yet the coarseness of some of the comic scenes in this play might be excused; it is the unredeemed shamelessness of the central figure of the action which curdles the blood like an evil vapour.

The Honest Man's Fortune (pr. 1647).

The Honest Man's Fortune, not known to have been printed before the First Folio, seems unlike the work last-noticed to show tolerably clearly in its composition that in this more dramatists than one were engaged. But while no doubt has been cast upon Fletcher's authorship of the concluding act, opinion has gone widely asunder as to that of the earlier parts, in which the evidence of form certainly tells against him. There is considerable probability that the third act is by Massinger[2]; but until more complete results shall have been obtained, it would be premature to pronounce against the traditional authority of the Folios. However this question may ultimately be settled, I cannot agree with Dyce, usually so sound a judge, who pronounces this play as, 'taken altogether, a drama of superior merit[1].' Beyond all doubt the plot as a whole is well constructed, and the action is more than usually full of human interest. But to my mind the management of the action labours under a certain tediousness, and the interest excited in the characters is not sufficient to enable the play to take hold of the mind. Montague 'the honest man' may preserve a dignified and cheerful demeanour under misfortune; but his virtue has its seamy side, and though he is ultimately preferred to the hand of the mistress whom he has served with so philosophical a temper[2], he had at an earlier stage of his career sought to console himself by sin for misfortune, besides in the period of his servitude accepting the pretended matrimonial proposals of a waiting-woman[3]. The faithful page Veramour, whom one of the characters persists in supposing to be a woman in disguise, is pleasingly drawn, but the relation between him and his master hardly rises to pathos, while there is nothing to distinguish his persecutor Laverdine and the other suitors of Lamira from the ordinary caricatures of fortune-hunting courtier, captain, and trader[4].

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[1] Even as it stands, there is something awful in the close of act iv, where Lelia is dragged away.—Dr. Koeppel has pointed out that Fletcher was hampered in this play by his imitation of part of the plot of Marston's *The Dutch Courtesan.*

[2] See the very elaborate argument by Mr. R. Boyle adducing some striking instances of parallel phraseology, in *Englische Studien,* vol. viii. pp. 40 *seqq.* His suggestion that the opening portion of the play was written by Cyril Tourneur is not very confidently advanced.

The Knight of Malta (*pr.* 1647; *acted before March,* 1619).

The date of the first performance of *The Knight of Malta* cannot have been later than March, 1619, when Richard Burbage, who acted one of the characters in it, died. It is not, however, known to have been printed before 1647. Fletcher can hardly have written either the first or the last acts; whether the remainder was the work of Beaumont or of Massinger, I am not prepared to determine. The greatest scene in the play[1], where Oriana's eloquence directs the thoughts of the youthful knight Miranda from a less pure passion to a spiritual love, is well suited to either of these writers; for I remember no nobler vindication of the authority of moral law in the whole range of the Elisabethan drama.

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[1] The same was however, I suppose, the opinion of the late Mr. R. H. Horne, who adapted this play for the modern stage.

[2] This *dénouement*, together with other passages in the plot, is thought to have been borrowed from the Second Part of a very effective and pathetic tale in Thomas Heywood's *Nine Books of Various History concerning Women;* but no edition of this book was published before 1624. The argument of Koeppel on the subject seems, however, to show that the authors of the play and Heywood must have used a common source.

[3] See act i. sc. 3, and act iv. sc. 1.

[4] At the close of the play are printed some vigorous lines by Fletcher, *Upon an Honest Man's Fortune*, which have no connexion, except that of a general agreement of sentiment, with the subject of the play. The final lines which furnish the keynote of the story have been quoted:

'Man is his own star, and that soul that can
Be honest, is the only perfect man.'

For the converse of this, finely put, see Montague's speech at the opening of act iv of the play itself.

The whole of this play—a 'tragic comedy' in very truth—of which the plot is traceable to no known original and apparently unconnected with any historical tradition[2], is written with sustained power, often rising to poetic fire. On a quasi-historic background, chosen with rare literary (for it is more than merely theatrical) insight, the passions of the evil Mountferrat and his black paramour Zanthia, who to secure his ultimate fidelity becomes the agent of his dark designs against the virtuous Oriana, contend against the consenting dictates of law and morality. The author or authors seem to enter with something like genuine sympathy into the higher significance of the code of chivalry which they celebrate. The soldier-like straightforwardness of the Danish hero Norandine furnishes a pleasant foil to loftier ideals of virtue, and although there is one weak point in the growth of the action[3], it is sustained when at its height and brought to a solemnly appropriate ending.

Thierry and Theodoret (*pr.* 1621).

The Tragedy of Thierry, King of France, and his Brother Theodoret, has a history in some measure peculiar to itself among the plays attributed to the joint authorship of Beaumont and Fletcher. It was first published in 1621, without an author's name, as a play divers times acted, and, not having been included in the First Folio, was republished in 1648 as by Fletcher. In the following year, however, another edition appeared with the names of both poets, and of course it found a place in the Second Folio. The epilogue which had accompanied the original edition speaks of 'our poet'—a singular which has been attributed to the 'modesty' of Massinger[1]. Fletcher's hand is visible in the versification of opening and close; the intermixture of prose seems to indicate that the work dates from an early part of his career. Whether or not Beaumont was concerned in the planning of this fine play, or whether, as has perhaps been rather too readily assumed, Massinger had already joined hands with Fletcher in its composition, the unevenness of its execution certainly gives probability to the conjecture that it was partially founded on an older drama[2].

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[1] Act v. sc. 1.

[2] Dr. Koeppel, pp. 68–9, has pointed out certain features which may have been derived from two favourite tales reproduced by Paynter from Bandello and from the *Decamerone*.

[3] See act iii. sc. 2, where the jealousy of Gomera leading to the supposed death of Oriana seems to be provoked with too much haste.

The plot of this tragedy has a kind of historical *substratum* of the Austrasian queen Brunhild, whose tragic story with its awful close presents, as a remark of Hallam's reminds us, so striking a parallel to that of Mary Queen of Scots. Undoubtedly the terrible struggles imposed upon Brunhild hardened her nature, if they did not drive her into crime after crime; but her character can have had nothing in common with the monstrous compound of lasciviousness and brutality upon whom the dramatists have bestowed her name (Brunhalt). In other respects, too, they have played havoc with history and its authorities; so that there is some colour for Mr. Fleay's supposition that one of the incidents in the tragedy was intended to point to the recent murder of Maria de' Medici's favourite minister Concini (Marshal de l'Ancre)[3], even if it was intended as a general 'satire' on the regency of the Queen-Mother.

The ferocious Queen in the play, with the aid of a congenial trefoil of companions—a paramour, a pander, and a physician who is a specialist in murder, and counterfeits astrological knowledge—after seeking in vain to estrange from one another her sons Thierry and Theodoret, contrives successively the murder of both. The devices of Brunhalt and her agents are in part of an unutterably loathsome character, more especially where they are directed to the destruction of the happiness of King Thierry and his bride Ordella. But this revolting intrigue is made to furnish opportunities for passages of much pathos; and the character of Ordella, rather hyperbolically praised by Charles Lamb, is throughout drawn with real sweetness. For myself, I should be disposed to seek the chief beauties of this tragedy, neither in the scene extolled by him[1]. but assuredly built on a foundation too unnatural to deserve acceptance, nor in the narrative of Martell in the following scene, which loses its force because it is known to be fictitious. The finest part of the play is assuredly its conclusion, clearly from Fletcher's hand, where the sleepless misery of the poisoned Thierry is pictured with a dramatic truthfulness which can spare the aid of the grosser realism so frequently introduced into similar scenes. The last brief colloquy between the dying young King and his bride, and their union in death, gently dissolve the dire terrors of the catastrophe[2].

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[1] Mr. Fleay, however, points out that this Epilogue is also that of Shirley's *Love in a Maze* (1632), from which he concludes it to have been stolen.

[2] Cf. Fleay in *Englische Studien*, vol. ix. p. 21. A play called *Brunhowlte* is mentioned by Henslowe in 1597, and a *Brunhowlle* in 1598. (*Diary*, pp. 116 and 276.)

[3] These events happened in 1617; and the name of the captain of the royal guard who (perhaps against the wishes of King Lewis XIII) made an end of Concini, was Vitry—also the name of the disbanded officer in the play who despatches Protaldye 'gallant unto Brunhalt.' This unmistakeable reference to recent history certainly increases the probability that Massinger had some concern in the play.

Love's Cure (*pr.* 1647).

Love's Cure, or The Martial Maid (not known to have been printed before the First Folio), is in the Prologue spoken at a revival expressly ascribed to the partnership of Beaumont and Fletcher, whereas the Epilogue speaks of 'our author.' If this author was a reviser only, he had applied his hand to some purpose, for the versification is unlike

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[1] Act iv. sc. 1.

[2] The whole of this scene, from the point where Thierry is brought in on his couch, is truly tragic, in particular Thierry's first speech descriptive of his misery, Martell's description to him of his unnatural mother as—

> 'The mother of your woes, sir, of your waking,
> The mother of your people's cries and curses'—

and Thierry's dying recognition of his loved Ordella:

> ''Tis she! I know her now, Martell.—Sit down, sweet.
> Oh, blest and happiest woman!—A dead slumber
> Begins to creeps upon me.—Oh, my jewel!'

Fletcher's[1]. (The play contains a considerable admixture of prose.) It shows, however, his skill in construction, being very symmetrically put together and worked up to a most ingenious deadlock[2]. The central idea—that of a young woman brought up as a man, and a young man brought up as a woman, who alike require love's sharp cure in order to be restored to the sentiments proper to their respective real sexes—might be held admissible in an extravaganza or a wild farce, but is quite inappropriate to a comedy, although Fletcher has availed himself of every opportunity for coarse suggestions offered by his story. Some not unpleasing sentiment[3], however, mingles with a great deal of rough fun, supplied in particular by the serving-man Bobadilla, a very humorous figure. The villainous Alguazier—a 'sharking, pandering constable'—is a new variety of the guardian of the night, so consistently defamed in Elisabethan comedy. Passages of this play[4] undoubtedly show a tendency to ample humorous characterisation more in Jonson's manner than in Fletcher's; but he may well, like his fellow-dramatist[5], have taken an occasional leaf out of their friend's open book.

Wit at several Weapons (*pr.* 1647).

In this group of plays may finally be included the insignificant comedy of *Wit at several Weapons*, not printed, at least under this title, before the First Folio. The epilogue written for the revival of this play very distinctly implies that Fletcher wrote only part of it[1]; whether it was rightly included in the Folios as by him and Fletcher, or whether, as seems very possible, Middleton had a share in the work, it would be idle to pretend to determine. Mr. Fleay ingeniously supposes *Wit at several Weapons* to have been identical with *The Devil of Dowgate, or Usury put to Use*, a comedy licensed with Fletcher's name in 1623[2]. The epilogue just cited ventures to describe this as 'no vulgar play'; but though not deficient in life, this farcical piece is neither perspicuous in construction nor pleasing in detail. Sir Perfidious Oldcraft, a very faint likeness of Sir Giles Overreach, has resolved to let his son live by his wits, and to marry his niece to a wealthy fool. The son's escapades, however, prove so costly to the father, that he has to grant an allowance to his prodigal after all; while the niece marries a lover of her own choice, an ingenious trickster of the name of Cunningham. The figure of Credulous Oldcraft, Sir Perfidious' nephew, 'raw' from Cambridge, furnishes another illustration of the tendency of the dramatists of this age to laugh at the results of a University education—in the case of Master Credulous one which had been protracted for nine years[3]. The picture here offered of society, with its gentlemen and gentlewomen of the highway, is the reverse of pleasing; but this comedy is but a light piece of ware, and devoid even of much bitterness in its satire, except in the figure of the cozened old cozener[4].

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[1] There is also a conflict of evidence as to the date of the play. The mention (*ad in.*) of the siege of Ostend enables Mr. Fleay (*u. s.*, p. 180) to calculate the date as falling between 1606 and 8; but an allusion elsewhere (act ii. sc. 2) to the 'cold Muscovite' who 'lay here lieger,' i. e. was minister-resident, 'in the last great frost,' is held to apply to the winter of 1622. If so, the latter passage may of course have been introduced when the play was revised.

[2] See act v. sc. 3. Alvarez and his son Lucio are about to fight a mortal combat with Vitelli and his friend Lamoral, in spite of the entreaties of Alvarez' wife Eugenia, his daughter Clara (beloved by Vitelli), and Genevora (beloved by Lucio). Enter Bobadilla, with two swords and a pistol. The two young ladies present the swords at one another's bosoms, and Bobadilla levels the pistol at Eugenia. 'Come down,' says the Judge, reminding one irresistibly of the Beefeater in *The Critic*.

[3] The first awakening of tender love in Clara's breast is prettily depicted (act ii. sc. 2).

[4] See especially the cobbler's eulogy of the 'gentle craft' (act ii. sc. 1).

[5] Cf. *ante*, p. 662, as to *The Woman-Hater*.

Love's Pilgrimage, acted as 'renewed' in 1636, seems in the opening lines of the Prologue, which speaks of the play as

Beaumont (?), *Fletcher*,

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[1] 'His brisk muse
Was so mercurial, that if he but writ
An act or two, the whole play rose up wit.'

[2] See *English Drama*, vol. i. p. 218, where Mr. Fleay cites the title of the old ballad *The Devil of Dowgate and his Son*, and refers to young Wittypate's mock assurance to his father (act i. sc. 2): 'Father, you shall know that I put my portion to use, that you have given me to live by.'

[3] See act iv. sc. 1.

[4] *Wit at several Weapons* was in 1709 altered by Colley Cibber under the title of *The Rival Fools*. In the Prologue he airily confesses:

'From sprightly Fletcher's loose confed'rate Muse,
Th' unfinished hints of these light scenes we choose';

and adds that the original was so hastily written, as barely to have furnished 'the trimming of a play' to himself. (See Genest, vol. ii. p. 412.)

and Massinger's (?) Love's Pilgrimage (acted as 'renewed' 1636; pr. 1647).

'new,' to be ascribed to a well-known joint authorship. Unless this refers to Beaumont and Fletcher, the latter and Massinger must be the partners intended; but this is on the face of it a less suitable interpretation; and it seems hazardous to follow the most recent critic of the text[1], and to recognise in it traces of the workmanship of Beaumont and Fletcher severally, and of alterations added by Massinger and Jonson. *Love's Pilgrimage* was long supposed to have been 'corrected and finished' by Shirley; but the statement on which this supposition was based must be dismissed as apocryphal. Whoever adapted it at the time of its renewal, inserted in the first scene of this play[2] two considerable passages, slightly altered, from Ben Jonson's *New Inn*, acted in 1629 and printed in 1631. It is possible that this was done by Jonson himself, whose own play had been a conspicuous failure[3]; or *vice versâ*, that Jonson had transferred these passages to the *New Inn* from the original *Love's Pilgrimage*; but neither solution commends itself on its merits[4]. *Love's Pilgrimage* in its present form was printed in the First Folio.

The comic element in this play is slight,—although some humour may be found in the bailiff Incubo, who does the honours of the tavern, and is ready to talk politics and eat and drink (not at his own expense) with any stranger. The main action of the plot, taken from one of Cervantes' *Novelas Exemplares*[5], is interesting, although spun out to perhaps excessive length. It is in fact the history of an example of that bane of society for which, in its less destructive variety, some modern satirist has invented the expressive but hardly scathing enough designation of the 'male flirt[6].'

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[1] Mr. E. H. Oliphant, in *Englische Studien*, vol. xv. pp. 346 *seqq.*

[2] *Viz.* a passage near the beginning, and the dialogue between Diego and Lazaro at the close of the scene.

[3] Cf. *ante*, p. 375.

[4] Mr. Fleay has passed from the latter to the former. See *English Drama*, vol. i. p. 194, where the further conjecture is offered, that the early *Love's Pilgrimage* was *The History of Cardenio*, entered in the Stationers' Registers in 1653 as by Fletcher and Shakspere.

[5] *Las dos Donzellas.*

[6] A long interval may seem to separate Don Juan, the squire of dames, and the unreformed Beau Austin from a Cadenus who has room in his heart for

Marc-Antonio's contempt for women prevents him from keeping his faith, but not from engaging in amours—as indeed he confesses in the scene where he expounds his shallow philosophy. Thus he has brought woe upon two fair maidens to whom he has promised marriage, but whom he has deserted at the last moment; and both of them have now become disconsolate wanderers, disguised in male attire. Fate brings them together, and in a scene, dramatically very telling[1], Theodosia listens to Leocadia's narrative of an experience identical with her own. Accident introduces Marc-Antonio into their presence at Barcelona[2], and after he has been repulsed in an attempt at beginning a third intrigue—this time with a married woman—he at last repents, and a solution is reached. In spite of its possibly unusually composite authorship, this play may be regarded as a successful example of its species of comedy; but its decidedly moral purpose has failed to impart to it any real elevation of moral tone.

(2) *Plays by Fletcher only:*

Wit without Money (*pr.* 1639).

The plays comprised in the numerous group next ensuing may be confidently regarded as written by Fletcher alone; although with regard to the first on the list an early tradition asserted Beaumont's collaboration. The comedy of *Wit without Money*, which cannot have been written before 1614[3], is in the edition of 1639 and in later impressions ascribed to both dramatists. But already in the Prologue of an adaptation published in 1708 it is assigned to Fletcher only. The evidence of style and versification appears to

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two secret affections, but not for one manly resolve. But at the root of their common weakness lies the belief that the love of women is to be reckoned among

'mirths and toys
To cozen time withal.' (Act ii. sc. 3.)

[1] Act iii. sc. 2.

[2] The historical character of Barcelona is happily hit off. See act iv. sc. 1: 'Oh the quiet hurly-burlies I have seen in this town, when we have fought for hours together, and not one amongst us so impertinent or modest to ask why?'

[3] See act ii. sc. 4:

'Dragons in Sussex, sir, or fiery battles
Seen in the air at Aspurg.'

'A strange monstrous Serpent' was discovered in Sussex in 1614, and is also alluded to in Jonson's mask of *News from the New World* (1620). See Dyce's note, iv. 128, where he conjectures *Asperg* for *Aspurg*, and notes Weber's conjecture that the latter may be a corruption of *Augsburg* or *Habsburg*.

justify the agreement of later critics in adopting the latter conclusion[1].

This play deserves the praise of originality in the conception of the two chief characters, Valentine and Lady Heartwell, although its force is diminished rather than heightened by the parallel relation between their respective brother and sister, Francisco and Isabella, who are drawn neither as a contrast to nor as a copy of the other pair. Valentine is a young man of noble feeling, but perversely contemptuous of the ways of the world, among which his philosophy reckons the maintenance of an estate, the receiving of rents, and respect for property in general, including his own. He holds it a first principle that it becomes a man to live by his wits alone, and to scorn all thought of money. Besides these ideas, he cherishes a strong contempt for women, and for widows in particular. After being reduced to poverty by carrying his views into practice[2], he is rescued by the affection of the fair widow Heartwell, a personage not less freespoken and high-spirited than he is himself[3]. The scene (act iii. sc. 1) in which he is first attracted to her by her vigorous defence of her sex against his taunts, is admirably conceived; and although the interest abates towards the close, and the resolution of the brothers has ignobly to be determined by the effects of sack, the play as a whole deserves to rank among the higher class of Elisabethan comedies, in which character is drawn with originality and force. Its interest is of course not diminished by the very modern effect of much of its satire.

Bonduca (acted before 1619).

The tragedy of *Bonduca* (produced some time before March, 1619, the date of the death of Richard Burbage, who performed one of the characters) is now generally regarded as Fletcher's unassisted work. It would of itself establish his claim to a high rank among English authors of romantic tragedy.

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[1] This comedy was, according to Genest, acted on the English stage at intervals up to 1757. A German translation of it, by A. Seubert, has been published under the title of *Geist ohne Geld.*

[2] Which indeed savour of a universal benevolence such as has at other times been fashionable among young men of birth and education. (See act i. sc. 1.)

[3] Her sister's description of her (act i. sc. 2) is an excellent sketch of a young lady who has profited by the higher education which she has bestowed upon herself.

The subject of this play, originally derived from Tacitus, but probably taken by Fletcher, in the main at least, from Holinshed[1], has commended itself to the notice of several dramatic poets. Apart from Fletcher's tragedy, and several alterations which it underwent at the hands of successive adapters[2], the story of Bonduca or Boadicea has been treated by at least two other English dramatists, while that of Caractacus has furnished the materials for yet another tragedy[3]. It would indeed be strange had one of the most striking episodes of British history, narrated in something more than outline by the most dramatic of ancient historians, failed to attract the attention of English playwrights. Fletcher, however, has used his materials with the utmost freedom, and by no means without circumspection. Thus, for instance, he has developed the brief mention of the fate of the Roman officer Poenius Postumus into a series of striking scenes, interwoven with admirable skill into the general action of his drama. Its real hero is not Bonduca, whose heroic death expiates a fatal want of prudence, not to say of wisdom, but Caratach (Caractacus), in whom the dramatist has drawn the inspiring figure of a generous and sagacious soldier, as well as of a patriot true unto death. Bonduca drops into the second place, while the pathos of the situation is personified not so much in the two daughters—though the unwillingness of the younger to offer the sacrifice of her maiden life is depicted with much natural force—as in the boy-prince Hengo, the companion of Caratach in their last struggle against their common doom. But though all these characters—as well as the Roman captains—are effectively drawn, the supreme merit of the play lies in the general conduct of its action. The Elisabethan drama, to my knowledge, offers few pictures of war so vivid and full of colour; camp, battle-field, and siege are brought before us without confusion or haste; and, without any sacrifice of clearness, a most stirring succession of scenes seems to place us in the midst of a real contest of arms. Unfortunately, in the last act, an attempt is made to turn the manly emotion of Petillius to a falsely humorous account; and, in order not to contradict historical tradition, which the dramatist was at full liberty to alter, the hero Caratach is denied the reward of a hero's death.

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[1] Cf. B. Leonhardt in *Englische Studien*, vol. xiii, cited by Koeppel, *u. s.*, pp. 67-8. The passage in Tacitus is in the *Annals*, bk. xiv. cc. 29 *seqq.*

[2] Dyce notices *Bonduca, or The British Heroine*, published in 1696 by an actor of the name of George Powell; an altered *Bonduca* by the elder Coleman (1778); and a third alteration, entitled *Caractacus*, by J. R. Planché, acted in 1837.—The character of Hengo was imitated by Dryden in his *Cleomenes* (1692).—Purcell's music for *Bonduca*, composed in 1695, has been privately printed by Mr. Chappell.

[3] Hopkins' *Boadicea*, acted 1697, is noticed by Genest, vol. ii. p. 118; it was followed by Glover's *Boadicea* (1753), and Mason's *Caractacus* (published in 1759).

Valentinian (*acted before* 1619).

Valentinian (which for the same reason as that which applies to *Bonduca* must have been produced on the stage before 1619), may likewise be confidently ascribed to Fletcher's sole authorship[1].

Coleridge, in a criticism of remarkable power, has dwelt upon the shortcomings of this play as measured by a high moral standard. But these shortcomings are more or less common to the whole of Beaumont and Fletcher's dramatic works; and as a romantic tragedy, *Valentinian* must be allowed a very high rank. The plot, which treats with considerable freedom an obscure but interesting historical subject[2], is contrived with more than ordinary skill. The exposition in the first act is clear and striking, and the atmosphere of the tyrant's court at once brings home to us Valentinian's fatal passion for Lucina, the wife of Maximus,—her ruin and death,—the despair and mad desire of vengeance which seize upon her husband,—the solemn counsels of his friend Aëcius against the commission of a public wrong for the sake of private revenge,—the dark plot of Maximus to speed the execution of the design by removing the noble friend and counsellor,—Aëcius' noble death, preceded by that of the brave soldier Pontius,—and the poisoning of the tyrant, whose tortures are painted with fiery power. The whole of this succession of incidents constitutes a dramatic action of the most effective kind. The last act, in which Maximus seizes the reins of power and is murdered in the moment of triumph by his new consort, the tyrant's widow Eudoxia, disturbs rather than intensifies the interest aroused by what has gone before. The diction of this tragedy is dignified and frequently magnificent, while the conflict of moral forces which it powerfully represents is conceived in a spirit of genuine grandeur. The last act contains an incidental scene of some humour, and the best among the many fine lyrics scattered through the play[1].

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[1] An adaptation was published by Rochester in 1685: which Dyce condemns as in the very worst taste, but which seems to have been judicious in ending the tragedy with the death of Valentinian.

[2] Gibbon, who in chap. xxxv of his *Decline and Fall* relates the crimes and death of Valentinian III, observes that the narrative of Procopius is to be distrusted, and must be supplied and corrected by five or six chronicles which can only express, in broken sentences, the popular rumours current in more or less distant provinces.

The Loyal Subject (acted 1618).

The Loyal Subject (acted in 1618) is wholly by Fletcher[2], and, in my opinion, one of the most spirited of his romantic comedies. Of its kind this play appears to me altogether admirable, and deserving of the praise said to have been bestowed on it by King Charles I. Dyce need hardly have been at the pains of pointing out—what no one who has read the two plays will be willing for a moment to dispute—that Fletcher's owes no debt to Thomas Heywood's *The Royal King and the Loyal Subject*, though both are obviously founded on the same story, translated by Paynter from Bandello[3]. The similarity in title is far more likely to be the result of accident than of intention.

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[1] *Viz.* the scene (act v. sc. 5) where the poet Paulus plots his pageant, in which he insists on having 'a Grace'; for, as his interlocutor says,

> 'This poet is a little kin to the painter
> That could paint nothing but a ramping lion;
> So all his learnèd fancies are Blue Graces.'

The lyric referred to is the song 'God Lyaeus, ever young' in act v. sc. 7. —Dr. Koeppel points out a curious reminiscence of Falstaff's philosophy on honour in the speech of Maximus (act iii. sc. 3).

[2] It was, according to Dyce, adapted by two eighteenth-century writers—of whom one was the elder Sheridan. (The earlier adaptation, by 'M. N.,' in 1706, bore the title of *The Faithful General.*)

[3] Cf. *ante*, p. 160, *note* 4.

And, since the scene of Fletcher's play is laid in Muscovy, while that of Heywood's is England, the later dramatist on this head probably adhered to the authority from which the earlier preferred to deviate.

In ease of construction, naturalness of developement, variety of character, and general dramatic merit, Fletcher's play is infinitely superior to Heywood's, although in nobility of sentiment and general elevation of tone the preference must be given to the older dramatist. True loftiness of character is what Fletcher seems hardly ever quite able to pourtray; and thus the outburst of Archas in the climax of the action [1] lacks the dignity demanded by the general idea. But, with this exception, the character of the hero is admirably sustained; nor could anything be more attractive, or more true to nature, than the good-will which the brave old general exhibits towards his soldiers even when reproving them. Fletcher has caught with wonderful spirit the characteristic features of the rough fidelity of the soldiers to their general, and of the outspoken affection of the hero's son, the colonel Theodore, for his misused father; and though these motives are repeated in a considerable number of scenes, none of them prove wearisome. In one scene, where the discontented soldiers worry the authorities by crying 'brooms'—and not brooms only —in their angry ears, the humour of the situation is seized with a vividness which induces one to pardon the coarseness of its expression. With the honest though mutinous soldiers are contrasted the courtiers, and with the faithful Lord Burris the villainous Borowsky. Nor are the female characters drawn with less spirit. The device of making one of the hero's sons assume a female disguise [2] strikes us as farcical, but it is unlikely to have created the same effect on the Elisabethan stage; and the tenderness with which the supposed Alinda inspires Olympia is prettily suggested. Lastly, the general's daughters—Honora and Viola—form a charming pair of companion-pictures of girlish innocence[1], pleasantly contrasted with one another; and the scene in which the frank kindliness and self-possessed purity of Honora shame the Duke into a remembrance of his better nature carries out a delightful conception with unaffected good feeling. Altogether, this play appears to me to be one of Fletcher's masterpieces, exhibiting his chief gifts as a dramatist, within the limits to which they were restricted. Nor can I call to mind many Elisabethan dramas the interest of which is similarly indebted, in hardly ascertainable proportions, to choice of subject, skilfulness of construction, vividness of characterisation, and excellence of style[2].

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[1] Act iv. sc. 5.

[2] Dr. Koeppel has pointed out the resemblance of the situation of the disguised young prince in the bye-plot to that of Pyrocles in women's weeds in the *Arcadia* (bk. i), which was more than once dramatised.

The Mad Lover (acted before 1619; pr. 1647).

The Mad Lover, which again must have been produced before March, 1619, is authoritatively ascribed to Fletcher only. Though exhibiting in diction and versification some of his most striking characteristics, and written with an exuberant vivacity, especially apparent in its comic scenes, besides containing a battle-lyric of genuine spirit[3], the play may be described as an example of romantic comedy run to riot. Its hero, the rough veteran general Memnon, is merely grotesque. Utterly inexperienced in the ways of courtship, he falls a sudden victim to the charms of the princess Calis, and resolves to obey literally her wish that he should leave his heart in her hand. As one of the characters justly observes, the general goes 'stupid mad'; and no further comment is necessary either on his madness and its cure, or on the various other intrigues which help to carry on the not very perspicuous course of the action. The subornation of the priestess is an incident reproduced, but by no means very precisely, from Bandello (iii. 19), or from the passage in Josephus (xiii. 4) on which the Italian novel was founded. Lascivious as the anecdote is, it might have been made the groundwork of a striking dramatic situation, such as cannot be said to be presented in this play[1].

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[1] How charming is this simile (act iv. sc. 3):

> 'What a sweet modesty dwells round about 'em,
> And, like a nipping morn, pulls in their blossoms.'

[2] The same dramatic motive as that of Heywood's and Fletcher's plays is treated in Lope de Vega's *El Duque de Viseo*, a tragedy founded on an episode of Portuguese history. Cf. Klein, vol. x. p. 490.

[3] See act v. sc. 4.

It may be worth observing that *The Mad Lover* is the only play of Fletcher's which contains a Fool of a type corresponding to that of the Shaksperean Fool proper.

The Humorous Lieutenant (*acted* 1619; *pr.* 1647).

The celebrated comedy of *The Humorous Lieutenant* may, according to Mr. Fleay, be stated with certainty to have been first produced in 1619[2], but is not known to have been printed before the First Folio. A MS. of the play dated 1625 and bearing the title of *Demetrius and Enanthe*, was however discovered and edited by Dyce[3]. But the title under which the play was originally performed adhered to it in its long theatrical career[4]. The story from which the notion of the character of the Lieutenant is taken occurs in Thomas Forde's *Theatre of Wits Ancient and Modern* (1660), and was no doubt derived by Fletcher from the anecdote here reproduced, and not from a passage in Horace[5], to which it bears only a secondary resemblance.

The enduring popularity of this comedy is the reverse of surprising. Although full of indecorous passages, its merriment is irresistible, and, even apart from the farcical figure and doings of the Lieutenant, the humour of the play is so fresh and natural, and the pathos so genuine, that one feels inclined to pardon a grossness which at least is not intended as a lure to immorality. The Lieutenant himself, whose oddly compounded temperament prompts him to fight when he is ill and rest when he is well,—the uncontrollable vehemence of his base-born heroism,—his audacious intrusion upon the privacy of the prince and its consequences[1],—his passion for the King, resulting from his having drunk off a dram intended for other lips,—all these are Aristophanic in their absurdity, and invented and carried out in the most reckless spirit of farce. It would at the same time be unjust to the merits of this play to pass by the very pleasing couple of Demetrius and Celia, with whom the main action is concerned. For the story of this amour Fletcher was not indebted to Plutarch, from whom he may, together with a species of historical background, have derived his general conception of his hero (Demetrius Poliorcetes, a most interesting historical figure, —'the Alcibiades of his age,' as he has been called by a modern historian of Greece[2]). As a love-story this play has not many equals in the Elisabethan drama,—from the first parting of the lovers, which partly recalls Romeo and Juliet, partly Egmont and Clärchen, to their final restoration to confidence in one another[3]. And the personality of Celia-Enanthe is charming in itself—one of those women sparkling with innocent vivacity whom Fletcher when he chose was well able to draw[4].

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[1] It is reproduced in Shirley's *St. Patrick for Ireland* (cf. *infra*).

[2] See *English Drama*, vol. ii. p. 208. Mr. Fleay asserts this to be, with the exception of those noted by Sir Henry Herbert as licensed by him, 'the most definitely dated of all Fletcher's plays.' Field and Burbage are not mentioned as having acted in it, but Condell, who appeared in all the other plays in which Burbage had a part, was one of the performers in this.

[3] 1830. It contains some additional passages. The MS. is preserved in the Dyce Library.

[4] A droll founded on the Lieutenant's humours was performed during the suppression of the theatres; and the comedy itself was chosen for the opening of the 'Theatre Royal' in Drury Lane in 1663. Pepys mentions it twice (*Diary*, April 20, 1661, and January 24, 1667), where he describes it as 'a silly play, I think,' but approves of the sensation of the Spirit. It was several times revived in the eighteenth century, and again, as altered by Reynolds, in 1817, when Macready played Demetrius, and Liston the Lieutenant. See Genest, vol. viii. p. 605.

[5] *Epist.* ii. 2, 26–40.

Women Pleased (*pr.* 1647).

Women Pleased (generally, but for no clear reason, dated about 1620) may be briefly noted as a tragi-comedy of singularly careless construction, in which the form of the verse suits the general looseness of the texture. Its plot is derived from various sources. One of these, as has been shown by Dr. Koeppel, is a popular sixteenth-century story of Spanish origin[1], turning like so many novels of an age nearer to our own on a Scotch marriage-law, although, it would seem in this instance, on one of apocryphal character. Another is *The Wif of Bathes Tale* in Chaucer. Lastly, the proceedings of Isabella, the wanton wife of the usurious Lopez, are traceable to not less than three models in the magazine-in-chief of such wares, the *Decamerone*. Penurio, the starved votary of good eating, is an amusing example of a favourite comic type[2].

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[1] See act iv. sc. 4.

[2] In Bishop Thirlwall's fifty-eighth chapter may be read an account of the unlucky battle of Gaza, introduced into the play. Demetrius was really married to Eurydice, a descendant of Miltiades.

[3] See act i. sc. 2, and act v. sc. 5.

[4] Honora, in *The Loyal Subject*, is another example of the same pleasing type. Celia's answer to the advances of the King (act iv. sc. 1) is in Fletcher's happiest manner:

'*Celia* (*rising*). I cannot love you;
Without the breach of faith, I cannot hear you:
You hang upon my love like frosts on lilies:
I can die, but I cannot love. You are answered. [*Exit.*'

The charm (act iv. sc. 4) is a graceful imitation of the incantation in *Macbeth*.

The next three plays are known to have been acted at Court in 1621; but of course the date of their original production is not necessarily fixed by this circumstance.

The Island Princess.

The Island Princess, owing perhaps in part to the interest commanded in this period by the remote archipelago where the scene of the play is laid, enjoyed much favour on its revival after the Restoration[3]; but its interest is chiefly adventitious. The earlier part of the plot of this romantic drama closely follows a story, which was appended to the first French translation of the *Novelas Exemplares* of

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[1] Viz. the story, as it may be called, of Aurelio and Isabella, though these do not seem to have been the original names. See Koeppel, pp. 87-8.

[2] In the diverting scene of the morris-dance (act iv. sc. 1 will be noticed the ridicule of the Puritans, here represented by Hope-on-high Barnby, who in token of his following no more 'the painted pipes of worldly pleasures' spits on the hobby-horse, as the

'beast, that signifies destruction
Fore-shew'd i' the fall of monarchies.'

[3] *The Island Princess* was revived in 1669 with alterations and new additional scenes. It now bore the second title of *The Generous Portugal* (Charles II's Portuguese marriage had been concluded in 1662). In 1687 the play was again altered, but according to Genest, vol. i. p. 456, not materially. by Nahum Tate in 1687; and it was again adapted by Motteux in 1699 as an opera, with music by Purcell and others. Motteux' opera occasioned the ballad, attributed to Walsh. of *The Confederates, or The First Happy Day of The Island Princess*, in ridicule of the interest taken by fashionable society in the disputes between the theatres in Drury Lane and Lincoln's Inn Fields. See Dryden's *Works*, edd. Scott and Saintsbury, vol. xviii. p. 172 and *notes*, and the epigrammatic couplet—

'Motteux and D'Urfey are for nothing fit
But to supply with songs their want of wit.'

(Genest, vol. ii. p. 164; from Malone.)

Cervantes, and was subsequently treated in a Spanish play, *La Conquista de las Moluccas*, by Melchior de Leon[1]. Although, therefore, this story cannot be actually proved to have had a Spanish origin, it is thoroughly Spanish in its sentiment, which is faithfully reproduced in Fletcher's play. The action of *The Island Princess* glorifies a chivalrous devotion to love, honour, and the exaltation of the Cross among the pagans, and has few points of contact with the ordinary experiences of contemporary life. Its scene lies in the Molucca islands, Tidore and Ternata, and its personages are the dynasts of those distant insular monarchies, and the heroic garrison of a Portuguese fort. Quisara, the Island Princess, who has pledged her hand to the preserver of her brother, is in the end overcome by his Christian constancy, but she requires a good deal of converting, and must be said to be in herself an unlovely personage. The magnanimity of the hero, the young 'Portugal' Armusia, is well sustained; but the English dramatist seems more at home with the character of the honest and lively Piniero, into whom he has transformed the assassin of the original tale[2].

The Pilgrim (*pr.* 1647).

The source of the story of *The Pilgrim* has been similarly traced to a Spanish original, Lope de Vega's rambling prose-romance of *El Peregrino en su Patria*[3]. A special literary interest attaches to this play, as having received additions from the hand of Dryden, said to have been the last production of his pen[1]; but Fletcher's drama is interesting in itself. The action transplants us with singular vivacity into the scene in which it is laid; and the atmosphere of southern romance, with its pilgrims and brigands, and woods and streams[2], is reproduced with easy naturalness. The loose construction of the play is in this instance not fatal to the intelligibility of the fable.

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[1] See Koeppel, *u. s.*, pp. 98 *seqq.*

[2] Cf. *ib.*, p. 100 *note.*—Piniero's notion of national preferences in pastimes has nowadays lost part of its force:

'*Christophero.* I wonder much, how such poor and base pleasures
As tugging at an oar, or skill in steerage
Should become princes.
Piniero. Base breedings love base pleasures:
They take as much delight in a barratto,
(A little scurvy boat,) to row her lithly,
And have the art to turn and wind her nimbly,
Think it as noble too (though it be slavish
And a dull labour that declines a gentleman,)
As we Portugals, or the Spaniards do in riding,
In managing a great-horse, (which is princely,)
The French in courtship, or the dancing English
In carrying a fair presence.' (Act i. sc. 1.)

[3] See Koeppel, *u. s.*, pp. 100 *seqq.*

Though this comedy abounds in serious and even pathetic situations, its tone is light, and its effect, owing principally to the delightful character of Juletta, one of the gayest *soubrettes* ever invented by a dramatist, decidedly exhilarating. The probability of the incidents—which include I know not how many disguisings—need not be very carefully considered, inasmuch as their variety keeps curiosity constantly alert. The characters are successfully contrasted; and if there is much sweet pathos in Alinda (whose love is more faithful than her charity is 'organised'[1]), there is some vigorous humour in her irascible father, whom the irrepressible Juletta, after subjecting him to a series of persecutions, towards the end of the play contrives to have confined in a mad-house. The picture of the mad-house may be contrasted with that drawn by Dekker[2]; but even here it is difficult not to admire the stage tact of Fletcher. Nothing could be more cleverly introduced than the incident (borrowed from *Don Quixote*) of the scholar who, after seeming perfectly sane, on the mention of a storm at sea suddenly announces that he is Neptune[3].

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[1] *The Pilgrim* was 'very much alter'd' by Vanbrugh, and produced in this form on 'the last day of the seventeenth century,' i. e. March 25, 1700, or thereabouts. The profits of a third night were assigned to Dryden (or his son Charles) on condition that he should add to the piece a Secular Masque, suitable to the solemn occasion, a lyrical Dialogue in the Madhouse between two Distracted Lovers. (See Scott's *Life of Dryden*, in the new edition of his *Works*, vol. i. pp. 363 *seqq.*) These pieces, of which the *Prologue* and *Epilogue* were written little more than a month before Dryden's death (cf. his letter, *ib.* vol. xviii. p. 179), will be found in vol. viii of the same edition. The *Prologue* contains an attack upon 'Quack Maurus' (Blackmore) in the author's most trenchant style; the *Epilogue*, though not written in a very penitent strain, at least offers an acknowledgment of the sins with which Jeremy Collier had charged the stage, and of which the poet, with more truth than spirit, seeks to shift the main responsibility to the Court. The *Masque* introduces Diana, Mars, and Venus as the tutelar deities of the reigns of James I, Charles I, and Charles II, and closes with a moral chorus (addressing itself to the three deities in turn) worth quoting:

'All, all of a piece throughout;
Thy chace had a beast in view:—
Thy wars brought nothing about;—
Thy lovers were all untrue.
'Tis well our old age is out,
And time to begin a new'—

a strange farewell on the part of the great poet to an era of our national life, of which he is the most splendid representative in our literature.—*The Pilgrim*, as altered by Vanbrugh, was revived on several subsequent occasions, in 1787 with additions by John Kemble, and for the last time in 1812.

[2] See the charming opening of act v. sc. 4.

The Wild-Goose-Chase (*pr.* 1652).

The Wild-Goose-Chase was omitted from the Folio of 1647, but only in consequence of its having been temporarily lost. On the stage this comedy appears to have been successful from the first, and it is on record how the author himself 'as well as the thronged theatre (in spite of his innate modesty)' could not refrain from 'applauding this rare issue of his brain.' On the recovery and publication of the play in 1652, several commendatory poems hailed it as one of Fletcher's masterpieces; it was adapted by one of the most popular dramatists of the post-Restoration period; nor was this the limit of its vitality[4]. In such a play much depends on the effervescence of the moment; and to my mind the merits of this comedy are in the main confined to sprightliness of dialogue and effective antithesis of what there is of character. The hero, a travelled Don Juan, is cured of his unwillingness to marry by the persevering wiles of a lady in love with him; while his less self-confident companions are, after a succession of delusions, likewise mastered by female craft. While this play seems to me to lack the irresistible comic force which could alone disguise its hard cynicism, it is not difficult to imagine the kind of acting which must have repeatedly ensured success to so much briskness and bustle[1].

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[1] In act i. sc. 2 she, much to her father's disgust, relieves a whole army of beggars (among whom her lover Pedro presents himself as a pilgrim). On Juletta's insinuating that all may not deserve her pity, Alinda replies:

> 'Wench, if they ask it truly, I must give it;
> It takes away the holy use of charity
> To examine wants'—

a sentiment truly Spanish, or for that matter Italian too.

[2] Cf. *ante*, p. 463.

[3] See act iv. sc. 6. The origin of this story (*Don Quixote*, Part ii. ch. 1) was first pointed out by Mr. Fleay (*English Drama*, vol. ii. p. 215).

[4] As to Fletcher's having taken part in applauding his own comedy (an act of self-oblivion probably not so unique as that of Charles Lamb when he helped to damn his own farce) see the Dedication of the edition of 1652. Among the commendatory poems is one by Lovelace, in the most crabbed manner of the Fantastic School. Farquhar's *The Inconstant, or The Way to Win Him* (1702) is a prose adaptation of *The Wild-Goose-Chase*: but the close—to my mind by no means a strong part of the original—is altered. Fletcher's play was revived in 1747.

Monsieur Thomas (*pr.* 1639).

The date of the first performance of *Monsieur Thomas*, which was printed in 1639 as by Fletcher only, with a dedicatory epistle and copy of verses in the author's honour by Richard Brome, is unknown; but certain indications tend to show that it was an early play[2]. The serious part of it was borrowed from Paynter's translation of one of Bandello's tales[3], founded on a well-known anecdote in Plutarch (the resignation by Seleucus I of Syria of his second wife Stratonice to his lovesick son Antigonus). The course of this story is treated with some pathos[4]; but Fletcher's powers, possibly with the aid of some suggestions from the *Decamerone* and the Elisabethan drama[5], were devoted mainly to the humorous part of the play. 'Monsieur Thomas,' the travelled scapegrace, whose manners have not been mended by his wanderings, and who alternately disgusts his pretty Mary by his wildness, and vexes the soul of his jovial father by his assumption of propriety, till he is all but rejected by the one and disinherited by the other, is just a little less respectable than Fielding's famous hero with the same Christian name. But the gaiety of the figure is undeniable; and the spirit of the play must be met half-way, as in the case of *The Humorous Lieutenant*. *Monsieur Thomas* is certainly more interesting than that popular play as a picture of manners, and indeed in this respect is excelled by few other Elisabethan comedies. Launcelot's description of a frolic in the streets may be instanced as an illustration, doubtless near to the truth, of a perennial exuberance of youthful folly[1].

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[1] The pseudo-pathetic scene (act iv. sc. 3) is worth noticing. The pretended madness of Oriana is almost as affecting as if it had been real; how exquisite, for instance, is the touch:

'Certain she knows you not, yet loves to see you.'

[2] See Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. ii. p. 182; and cf. *Englische Studien*, vol. ix. p. 15. It seems to have in 1639 had a second acting title, *The Father's own Son*; a droll, printed in 1672, and entitled *The Doctors of Dullhead College*, was taken from it under that name. It was altered by D'Urfey in 1678 under the promising designation of *Trick for Trick* (a title since borrowed for other plays), *or The Debauch'd Hypocrite*, the 'modish spark' being on this occasion, according to the Prologue, dressed 'fit to be shown.'

[3] ii. 55.

[4] See act ii. sc. 5.

[5] See Koeppel, pp. 95–6, where it is conjectured, with much probability, that the notion of the panerotic Hylas is taken from the 'common lover' Nymphadero in Marston's *Parasitaster*, and not direct from Ovid.

The Woman's Prize (*acted as an 'old play'* 1633; *pr.* 1647).

The Woman's Prize, or, The Tamer Tamed, was after some difficulties with the licenser[2], who mentions it as an 'old play, by Fletcher,' performed at Court in 1633. It was of course intended to take advantage of the popularity of *The Taming of the Shrew*, and if possible to outstrip its success. If the verdict of the Court reflected that of the public at large, the attempt was temporarily successful; for the licenser records that Shakspere's play, when performed before the King and Queen on November 23, 1633, was 'likt,' but that Fletcher's, when acted before them five days afterwards, was 'very well likt.' It is said to have been acted by Rhodes's company on the eve of the Restoration, and was certainly one of the first plays publicly performed after the entry of King Charles II into London; but it cannot be said to have kept the stage[3].

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[1] See act iv. sc. 2. The scene with the Doctors (act iii. sc. 1) is a capital bit of farce.

[2] Sir Henry Herbert in his Office-book, as quoted by Malone (see Boswell's *Variorum Shakespeare*, vol. iii. p. 208), notes the temporary prohibition of the play 'upon complaints of foule and offensive matters conteyned therein.' The matters in question have been conjectured to be the sneers against the Puritans, afterwards restored to the text (see act iii. sc. 2). This conjecture seems confirmed by a passage in the Prologue printed with the play:

> 'The end we aim at is to make you sport,
> Yet neither gall the city nor the court.'

[3] *The Tamer Tamed* was once revived in the eighteenth century—in 1757—as a shortened afterpiece. (See Genest, vol. iv. pp. 483-5.)—The performance on June 24, 1660, was accompanied by a curious Prologue and Epilogue by Thomas Jordan, printed in a contribution by Mr. H. G. Norton

The cleverness of this comedy is undeniable, and several of the situations in the last three acts are contrived with considerable humour. At the same time, the contrivance of the fun is artificial; and *The Tamer Tamed* may be pronounced a *tour de force*, which nothing but its author's unrivalled insight into stage effect could have enabled him to accomplish [1].

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to vol. iv of *The Shakespeare Society's Papers* (1849).—It may perhaps be well to add to this note a summary of the plot of Fletcher's play. Petruchio (the only character taken over from *The Taming of the Shrew*, for in Tranio and Bianca we have merely names from the *dramatis personae*) has become a widower by the death of his first wife, whom he had tamed so vigorously, and has gained the hand of Maria, daughter to Petronius. Her a noble ambition impels to turn the tables upon the man who in his conceit is conqueror of her sex, and before she submits to him as his wife, to tame him as he tamed Katharine of old. In carrying out her design she is seconded by her cousin Bianca, while her gentler sister Livia is swept along by the torrent of their spirit to resist marriage with an old dotard and achieve her union with the lover of her choice. Maria's campaign against Petruchio divides itself into a series of actions. The first of these is rebellion pure and simple. She and her confederates fortify themselves in their chamber, where they are joined by a whole army of female insurgents, and whence they refuse to come forth except with all the honours of war. This part of the play, which bears a certain resemblance to the *Lysistrata* of Aristophanes, is sheer burlesque, and though likely to cause uproarious mirth in a theatre, by no means belongs to an elevated kind of comedy. The rest of the action is far better, and more closely attaches itself to that of the Shaksperean play, though by no means devoid of originality. First, Maria pretends to all kinds of extravagant whims. Next, she excites her husband's jealousy. Then, when he tries to win her pity by falling sick, she causes him to be locked up by himself and reported mortally sick and mad, while she pretends to be about to take her departure with all the moveables; then, she turns on him for excluding her from his presence, and vows to abandon him; then, she feigns madness herself; and when, to force her to betray herself, he proposes to travel, she blandly returns to her senses and wishes him Godspeed on his journey. (The humour of this scene, act iv. sc. 5, is excellent, especially her solicitude that he should take his full time for improving his mind on his travels, and not go without the necessary comforts at the start:

'If you want lemon-waters,
Or anything to take the edge o' the sea off,
Pray speak, and be provided.')

Nothing remains for him but to feign death; whereupon he has the satisfaction of hearing her pronounce an epitaph on him very much the reverse of what he had expected. Thus he is tamed at last, and her victory is complete.

[1] In the amusing scene of Livia's mock deathbed Fletcher gives another proof of the facility with which he could draw on his own resources of pathos. If the situation were not sham, the pathos of Livia's 'last interview'

A Wife for a Month (acted 1624; pr. 1647).

A Wife for a Moneth (first acted 1624) is a romantic drama—or 'tragicomedy,' as it calls itself in one of the folios—by Fletcher only. Possibly, as Langbaine suggests, the imprisonment of King Alfonso of Leon by his brother Sancho of Castile (in the eleventh century) and Alfonso's ultimate restoration to power may have suggested such historical background as the play possesses; but it is more probable that the story was derived by Fletcher from some unknown novel. The plot of the piece is horrible; a revengeful despot tortures a pair of young lovers by means of their marriage for a month, and further cruelties are devised against them by the wife's brother. And there is little or nothing in the execution of the play to redeem its design. Even Queen Maria's eloquent speech[1] has a hollow sound—for, as it is not she who is to die, her readiness for death cannot be held of much account; while the language of the heroine frequently resembles that of an angry scold[2]. Indeed this play suffers from a general want of elevation in tone and feeling almost as much as from the unnatural ugliness of its story. At the same time, the outcries of the poisoned Alfonso prove that Fletcher could on occasion outvie any of his fellow-dramatists in extravagance of expression[3].

Rule a Wife and Have a Wife (licensed 1624: pr. 1640).

Rule a Wife and Have a Wife (first acted in 1624 and printed in 1640) owes its under-plot to one of the novels of Cervantes[4]; but the main plot appears to be Fletcher's own. Though of course in a measure cognate to that of *The Taming of the Shrew*, it has features sufficiently

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with Rowland would be undistinguishable from that of real situations of a similar character in other plays by the same author.

[1] Act ii. sc. 2.

[2] See *e.g.* act i. sc. 2, and the passage in act v. sc. 3 where at the very height of the situation she exclaims:

> 'To see your throat cut, how my heart would leap, sir!'

[3] See act iv. sc. 4. They have been thought to have been suggested by the last scene in *King John*—but how far the imitator had strayed from his original.—Weber has directed attention to certain resemblances between *A Wife for a Month* and *The Maid's Tragedy*; but, as he observes, the scenes to which he refers are differently conducted.—The sufficiently audacious device of Alfonso being *cured* by a draught of poison has been elaborated by M. Edmond About in one of his novels.

[4] *El Casamiento Engañoso*, one of the *Novelas Exemplares*.

distinctive to entitle it to be called original, as well as dramatically excellent. An indigent and despised husband, whom a proud beauty has married with the intention of securing a poor creature to serve as a cover for her extravagances, at the very moment in which she is surrounded by her admirers asserts himself as master of both his house and his wife, so that in the end he gains both her affection and the respect of all. This admirable conception is not less admirably carried out. And though this comedy too is much disfigured by coarseness, and, except in occasional touches[1], lacks real nobility of sentiment, the vigour of its execution—more especially in the last three acts—as well as the felicity of its central idea and the effective climax of its final situation, warrant the exceptionally enduring popularity which it has commanded[2].

The Chances (*pr.* 1647).

The Chances, another comedy of great and long-enduring popularity, is treated as by Fletcher only in the Prologue written for a revival of the play after his death; but the date of its production is unknown, and no satisfactory clue has to my knowledge been suggested[3]. The long-lived success of this comedy may probably be ascribed more especially to two causes. In the first place, while its plot follows a novel by Cervantes with a tolerably complicated story[1], it is in its first three acts an admirable model of dramatic construction. The situation of the two friends, of whom the one becomes in all innocence the finder of an unprotected lady, and the other of an unprotected infant, is extremely telling; and the solution of the difficulty is contrived naturally and easily. The action would have been complete without the second part of the play, though this is likewise founded on the novel; but the coarse farcical scenes for which opportunities are here furnished were of a kind only too certain to prove acceptable to seventeenth-century audiences. But the merits of the comedy are not confined to its plot. The characters of the two friends Don Frederick and Don John are drawn with remarkable freshness and gaiety: they are students—though not the romantic students of Cervantes—to the very life, and their frankness of soul and reckless freedom of speech were sure to make them favourites on the stage. Nor can it be denied that there is some humour in the students' landlady, Mistress Gillian; and perhaps the ridicule of magical practices implied in Vecchio's explanation of his own tricks may be placed to the credit of the author as a healthy satire on a credulity which the dramatists of this period were often inclined to foster rather than to expose[2].

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[1] For one of these see act iii. sc. 5. Leon having asserted himself as master of the situation, the Duke leaves him with a request that he will use his wife well. Leon replies—and few such touches of dignity will be found in Fletcher—

'Mine own humanity will teach me that, sir.'

[2] After furnishing materials for a droll, *An Equall Match*, this comedy on the re-opening of the theatres became an established favourite, and having been altered in Garrick's days (1776) was frequently revived in the last and the present century, and repeatedly reprinted (Garrick's version is in vol. x of *The New English Drama*, 1818). I have seen more than one play the central idea of which was evidently derived from that of *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife*.

[3] A droll taken from this comedy called *The Landlady* was printed in 1672. The comedy itself was revived in 1667, and printed as 'corrected and altered by a person of honour' (George Villiers Duke of Buckingham) in 1682. Cf. Genest, vol. i. p. 67. Buckingham's alteration of the last two acts may readily be forgiven him. (Mr. Fitzgerald in his *Life of Garrick*, vol. i. p. 300, speaks of an alteration by Sheffield Duke of Buckinghamshire, but this must be a mistake.)—In 1754 the play was revived with fresh alterations by Garrick, who must have taken special delight in the character of Don John. His adaptation was afterwards published. Other editions contained critical remarks by Cumberland, and by Mrs. Inchbald. According to Genest, it was acted for the last time in 1808; but a comic opera *Don John*,

(3) *Plays by Fletcher and another author or authors, not Beaumont.*

In the third and last group of plays to be noted in this chapter are comprised those in the composition of which Fletcher may be confidently assumed to have taken part, but in which some second—here and there perhaps some second and third—writer other than Beaumont co-operated with him. These plays it will, on the whole, be most

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or, The Two Violettas, founded on it by Reynolds, was performed at Covent Garden in 1821, with Charles Kemble as the hero.

[1] *La Señora Cornelia*, one of the *Novelas Exemplares*.

[2] See act v. sc. 3.—Fletcher's disbelief in witchcraft is also illustrated by *The Fair Maid of the Inn* (act v. sc. 2): '*Clown.* But if they shall go to a true conjurer, and fetch us back in a whirlwind?' '*Foroboseo* [the mountebank]. Do not believe there is any such fetch in astrology.'—Mr. Fleay, who dates this play 1615, thinks that an allusion to the phrase 'the Devil is an ass' probably supplied Jonson with a title for his play bearing that title.

convenient to mention in their probable chronological order; it should, however, be observed that not only are the dates of their first production on the stage in many cases unknown, but in several instances we have before us the later revision by another author of a play originally written by Fletcher. This is in particular frequently the case with plays belonging to that numerous series in which the presence of Massinger's hand admits of no reasonable doubt, and as a matter of course with those 'corrected' by Shirley.

Fletcher and Massinger's (?) The Queen of Corinth (pr. 1647).

The Queen of Corinth, although not known to have been printed before 1647, is shown by internal evidence to have in all probability been produced not later than 1618 or the following year. If so, Beaumont's co-operation is out of the question, and Fletcher's coadjutor—for he certainly seems to have had one—was very possibly Massinger, although other conjectures have been hazarded. In any case, the finest scene in the play, viz. that which depicts the despair of the vanished Merione[1], is unmistakeably to be included in Fletcher's share. As a whole, the composition betrays haste, dumb-show having in one place to be introduced by way of helping on the action[2], and presents a not very harmonious mixture of styles; while part of the first act[3] drags with a dulness unusual in Fletcher's plays. The comic scenes are full of personal satire[4], a tendency not usually observable in this dramatist. The story, widely unhistorical[1], of the plot is based upon one of the *Novelas Exemplares* of Cervantes; but its repulsive climax was invented by the authors of the drama[2].

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[1] Act ii. sc. 1.

[2] See act iv. sc. 4.

[3] sc. 2.

[4] Onos, the travelled dullard, and his uncle and tutor, who have accompanied him on the grand tour, is intended to ridicule Thomas Coryate, to whose well-known account of his journeys published in 1611 under the title of *Crudities hastily gobled up in five Moneths Trauell in France, Savoy, Italy, &c.*, a direct allusion is made in act iv. sc. 1, where the 'fork-carving traveller' is ridiculed. (Coryate had observed in Italy, and practised in England, the custom of using a fork at dinner.) Satire against pretentious travellers is common enough in the Elisabethan as in later dramatists; but Fletcher or his coadjutor has seized with much humour on the besetting weakness of *authors* of books of travels for recording their personal experiences in such matters as eating and drinking, as if these were subjects of general interest. Onos, who never 'repented anything in his life' (act iv. sc. 1), goes off (act v. sc. 3) to recover the honour which he has lost through being humiliated by a page with whose master he had aspired to fight a duel, by means of a spell of thirty years' further travel.—Coryate died in India in 1617 (December); and I agree with Mr. Fleay that it is unlikely that such satire should have been introduced into a stage-play just after his death had become known in England. (As to the ridicule of Coryate in Shirley's *The Ball*, see below.)

The dates of the following six plays are approximately fixed by two considerations. They cannot have been written before the death of Burbage in March 1619, as he appeared in none of them; again, they are not included among the entries of Sir Henry Herbert of plays licensed by him as Master of the Revels, which commence with May 24, 1622[3].

Fletcher and Massinger's (?) The Double Marriage (*pr.* 1647).

The Double Marriage, which Dyce still supposed to be by Fletcher only, seems now to be generally regarded as a joint composition by him and Massinger; but there are indications that in the play as printed we have the revision of an earlier work, in which no hand but Fletcher's may have been concerned. Indisputably, the opening dialogue between Virolet and Juliana, founded on the famous scene between Brutus and Portia in *Julius Caesar*[4], is in Massinger's rather than in Fletcher's manner, and its earnest force is wholly unlike the melting pathos with which the versification of the husband and wife's tragic mutual farewell so completely harmonises[5]. Altogether, *The Double Marriage* cannot be pronounced a successful piece of work[6]. The construction of the plot, for which no original has been discovered, is dramatically unsound; the promise of marriage made by Juliana's husband Virolet, in order to liberate himself and Ascanio from captivity, has an ignoble effect; our sympathy is concentrated on the character of Juliana, to the exclusion of Martia, even before the change in that virago from love to hate and infidelity; and the death of Virolet by his faithful wife's hand, being the result of a mere error, is not only vexatious but distressing. The experiences of Castruccio, though in part[1] borrowed from those of Sancho Panza, are not interesting enough to furnish a relief; on the other hand, the scenes on board ship and the talk of the sailors are full of vivacity[2].

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[1] See act v. sc. 4. The statute of 'Lycurgus the Nineteenth' is particularly daring.

[2] See Koeppel, p. 75. The novel is *La Fuerça de la Sangor.*

[3] See Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. i. p. 209. For Herbert's lists, so far as they concern Fletcher, see Fleay, *History of the Stage*, pp. 301 *seqq.*, 333 *seqq.*

[4] Act ii. sc. 1. The name of Virolet's boy Lucio is doubtless derived from the same source.

[5] Act v. sc. 2.

[6] It was revived in 1683, but does not appear to have kept the stage.

Fletcher and Massinger's (?) Sir John van Olden-Barneveld acted 1619.

The extremely interesting tragedy of *Sir John Van Olden Barnavelt* bears on the face of it every mark of having been produced soon after the catastrophe of the great Advocate of Holland. Moreover, the evidence of two contemporary letters shows that three months after his execution—*i. e.* in August 1619—that event was brought on the London stage in a play which 'had many spectators and received applause[3].' The play in question, though of its kind almost without a parallel in the literature of the great age of our drama, had slumbered in MS. till a quite recent date, when it was most fortunately recovered and made known by Mr. Bullen[4]. No difference of opinion exists among the critics who have published their views concerning this play, as to its having been the joint composition of Fletcher and Massinger. With regard to the elder of the pair, indeed, the internal evidence of style and versification is too palpable to admit of doubt; such a scene as that of Leidenberch's (Ledenberg) suicide in the presence of his sleeping boy[1] could only have been written by Fletcher, or by a slavish imitator of his style when at its height. The outward signs of Massinger's participation are not to be so implicitly trusted, more especially in so far as they consist of certain characteristics of versification recurring in a more intensified or exaggerated form in Fletcher himself[2]. Yet it must be allowed that few plays more distinctly show the difference as well as resemblance between the two poets in these respects; while so far as the choice of theme and the essentials of its treatment are concerned, they point to the collaboration of some other mind with Fletcher's, and are fairly though not closely consistent with what is known to us of Massinger's attitude as a dramatist towards contemporary history. For while, as will be seen below, he repeatedly adopts an allegorical treatment of political events, situations and characters, I am not aware that any play known with certainty to be his brings an actual chapter of recent political history directly on the stage, after the manner of Chapman's *Byron* or Glapthorne's *Albertus Wallenstein*. At the same time he —or the writer of those portions of this tragedy which have been ascribed to him—appears here and there to have intended to suggest that a double meaning underlies his very imperfect transcript of a passage of contemporary history[3].

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[1] Act v. sc. 1.

[2] Act ii.

[3] These letters, written from the Hague by Sir Dudley Carleton (afterwards Lord Dorchester), were first pointed out in the *State Papers* by Mr. S. Lee.

[4] The play is reprinted in vol. ii of *A Collection of Old English Plays* (1883), with an *Introduction* and an *Appendix* by Mr. R. Boyle, assigning to Fletcher and Massinger their supposed respective shares in it. Mr. Fleay, who had, independently of Mr. Boyle, arrived at the conclusion that *Sir John van Olden-Barneveld* is in the main the joint composition of Fletcher and Massinger, agrees as to the distribution of scenes. (See *English Drama*, vol. i. p. 209, and cf. *History of the Stage*, p. 268, for a list of the actors of the parts.)—Mr. Bullen mentions three contemporary publications in English as having been likely to have been used by the author or authors of the play, including a Dutch *Barnavel's Apologie*, translated into Latin and then into English, and furnished with some violent 'Castigations' by a Contra-Remonstrant minister, as well as an account of the arraignment of Barneveld, and of the articles exhibited against him. The latter as preserved in the Hague Archives are actually 215 in number; the interrogatories and answers to the trial were published in 1850 by the Historical Society of Utrecht. See Motley's *Life and Times of John de Barneveld* (1874),—a work of great warmth of feeling and colour, if not altogether of judicial impartiality.

For, though bringing on the stage not only most of the chief personages concerned in a very important and significant historical episode, but also many of its actual incidents, this tragedy can hardly be said to constitute a serious attempt to impress upon an English audience either the real meaning of the catastrophe or the various motives actuating its responsible authors. The chapter of Dutch history which the dramatists sought to reproduce, narrates a momentous struggle waged between the upholders of State-rights on the one side and of the power of the Union on the other, which furnished the victorious force of Calvinism, more secure of the masses than ever, with its opportunity for crushing the life out of the condemned Arminians. The issue of this conflict is represented in the play as a just chastisement inflicted upon a wily schemer[1] by a courageous prince at the head of equally brave—and pre-eminently English—troops[2]. Even the masculine rhetoric of the chief scene in the play, the trial-scene in the fourth act, which it is difficult to ascribe to any hand but Massinger's, fails to affect the mind very powerfully; for what has preceded it hardly seems to warrant an appeal on the part of the hero of the play, resembling that of the great Africanus to the people of Rome. The death of Burneveld in the last act, again, is by a different writer and in a different strain;—in other words, Fletcher is once more playing with an expert hand on our heart-strings, and the trite moral of the tragedy is pointed by a broken old man, conscious at last of the futility of his ambition.

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[1] Act iii. sc. 6. The incident is historical. (See Motley, ch. xx.)

[2] Such is especially the case with the feminine (often trisyllabic) endings. The run-on lines are more frequent in Massinger; but here again the mannerism is rather on Fletcher's side.—*Barneveld* contains a small amount of prose.

[3] See act iv. sc. 5:

'The Catos
And all free spirits slain or else proscrib'd
That durst have stirr'd against him [Octavius], he then seiz'd
The absolute rule of all. *You can apply this.*'

The last few words are struck out of the MS., and a harmless reading is substituted in their place. Mr. Bullen thinks that an application to the execution of Ralegh (1618) lay ready to hand; but who was Octavius?—In the closing scene there is an open reference to the Gunpowder Plot.

Fletcher and Massinger's (?) *The False One* (*pr.* 1647).

The mention of a play which copies a scene from *Julius Caesar* is appropriately followed by that of one of the many *Cleopatra*-dramas of modern literature. But *The False One*—which both Prologue and Epilogue show to have been written by two writers, and in whose stern fifth act at all events Massinger seems recognisable[3], was, as the Prologue very clearly states, in no sense intended as a challenge to the laurels of the author of *Antony and Cleopatra*. The subject of this play is the early history of the Egyptian queen, her intrigue with Julius Caesar, and his danger and victory at Alexandria. This part of Cleopatra's story had formed the theme of a tragedy by Samuel Daniel, not intended for the stage; and an earlier French play on the subject was likewise in existence[1]. The title of *The False One*, printed as Fletcher's, presumably refers in a general way to the wiles of the Serpent of old Nile, and not to her conduct in this particular drama, or to that of any other of its characters, although a claim to the title might be put forward on behalf of Septimius. Much of it, those passages in the earlier part of the work especially—into which the authors have freely welded much of the glittering metal of Lucan's poetry—is very finely written[2]; and the opening of the action is singularly clear and impressive. The feeble King, hesitating between his wise counsellor Achoreus and his evil genius the eunuch Photinus, brings his doom upon himself by his cowardly policy of dishonesty and craft, while at the outset the murder of Pompeius deprives him of all our sympathy. But as the action progresses, stirringly enough in its details, to the close of the struggle between the star of Caesar and the ambition of Photinus, and to the victory of Caesar and of Cleopatra, the dramatic power of the authors begins to show itself unequal to the task which they have set themselves. The Cleopatra of this play is merely a cunning beauty scheming at any cost for her own ends, while Caesar's greatness has to be taken for granted till the crisis of the action arrives. His passion for Cleopatra is not in any way harmonised with his greatness, or on the other hand represented as a passing aberration. No attempt is made to throw light either on the historical or on the moral problem suggested by the episode; and the amour interests us neither more nor less than a hundred other intrigues of a kind common in this and indeed in most other periods of our drama. Among the minor characters, the rough frankness of Scaeva—one of those blunt soldiers who constantly reappear in Fletcher's plays—is well contrasted with the villanous baseness of Septimius, a Roman more degraded than the Egyptians, whose gold he takes first for scandel-mongering and then for murder. His fit of repentance, or rather his pretence of it, on finding that his villany places him under a cloud, and his cheerful return to his sins when the prospects of the market brighten, are humorously invented.

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[1] See his soliloquy, act iv. sc. 3, in which he appears as a sort of baffled Macchiavel.

[2] The regular troops commanded by Maurice of Nassau, with whose aid he disbanded the local defensive forces of the 'Waartgelders' (the 'new companies' of the play), and bore down all resistance, consisted mainly of foreigners and largely of Englishmen. Hence the patriotic flavour of the lively scenes in act ii, and in particular the humour of the 'English gentlewoman's' admonitions to the Dutchwomen, clamorous for her conversion to their broader views of the rights of their sex.—As a matter of course, the attitude of James I towards the Dutch question, and his illogical acquiescence in the catastrophe of Barneveld, strongly influenced the dramatists.

[3] He is also thought to have written act i, where the metrification is however very uneven.

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[1] Cf. *ante*, pp. 618 and 186. The death of Pompeius is an incident in Chapman's *Caesar and Pompey* (cf. *ante*, pp. 425 *seqq.*). Fletcher's play was adapted by Cibber, and produced in 1724 under the title of *Caesar in Ægypt*, when his 'quavering Tragedy tunes' as Achoreus, and the pasteboard swans pulled along the Nile by the carpenters, furnished much amusement to some of the spectators. (Genest, vol. iii. p. 161.)—*The False One* is, I think, overpraised by Hazlitt.

[2] Compare especially the fine speech of Caesar on being offered the head of Pompey (act ii. sc. 1) with the close of Bk. ix of the *Pharsalia*.

The short masque introduced into this play contains some spirited verses descriptive of the gifts of the Nile[1].

Fletcher and Massinger's (?) The Little French Lawyer (pr. 1647).

The comedy of *The Little French Lawyer*, which Dyce still thought to be by Beaumont and Fletcher, is now usually assigned to Fletcher and Massinger. The evidence of the versification tallies with this theory, but necessitates the further assumption that, contrary to what would seem to have been their ordinary practice, the two authors in certain instances took part in the same scenes[2]. Of the main plot of this rather long-lived play[3] it need only be said that it is an adaptation of a more 'merry' than decorous tale reproduced in Aleman's vagabond prose-epic of *Guzman de Alfarache* (1599–1605) from an earlier source—apparently from one of the novels of Massuccio Salernitano. In the English version, however, the character of the heroine Lamira remains untarnished; quite otherwise in the Spanish story which was no doubt the original of the play.

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[1] See act iii. sc. 4.—Mr. Fleay thinks it possible that this masque had been intended for the opening of the New River in 1613, when Middleton's entertainment was accepted (cf. *ante*, p. 495 *note*).

[2] See Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. i. p. 211; and cf. *ib.* as to the test of the varying accentuation of the proper name Dinant.

[3] It was repeatedly performed in the eighteenth century, in 1778 as a prose farce in two acts, said to have been put together by Mrs. Booth.—Richard Cumberland in his *Memoirs* (4to, p. 192) mentions that he borrowed a hint for the amusing character of Sir Benjamin Dove in his *Brothers* (1769) from that of La-Writ, the little French Lawyer.

The humour of the comedy lies in its satirical reference to the mania for quarrels of honour which had risen to its height—or perhaps[1] had just passed it—in the age in which the comedy appeared. A duelling atmosphere, so to speak, envelopes the entire action from the first scene onwards, where Cleremont preaches moderation in the practice to his friend, but concedes that there are half-a-dozen species of cases in which a gentleman who has a sword

> 'may use it
> To the cutting of a rascal's throat or so,
> Like a good christian.'

But the humorous application of the moral is conveyed in the character who gives his name to the piece—the lawyer La-Writ, who having been accidentally constrained to become a second in a duel, is by his equally accidental success infected with a terrible love of the practice, and under the influence of his new-fledged valour abandons his clients and challenges the judge who, in the absence of the advocate, has cast their suit. Finally, he is beaten back into his senses, and (not having been disbarred) resumes the more usual weapons of his profession. The character, though of course it touches on the borders of farce, is full of fun; and the moral which from this point of view the piece conveys doubtless needed enforcement. This comedy, which is throughout written with great spirit, recalls in different passages a famous episode in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, and the nurse in *Romeo and Juliet*.

Fletcher and another's (?) *The Custom of the Country* (*pr.* 1647).

I find it difficult to persuade myself that *The Custom of the Country*, which was performed as an 'old play' in November 1628 and was therefore produced some time before that date, was not, as Dyce thought most probable, Fletcher's unassisted handiwork; yet the Prologue appeals to 'the poets'; and slight as this evidence is, the safer course perhaps is not to ignore it. The supposition of Massinger's co-operation seems, however, necessitated neither by such variations as are to be found in the character of the verse, nor by any other cogent reason. The component parts of the plot of this piece—with the exception of the addition of certain scenes of gross obscenity—were taken from Cervantes' lengthy romance of *Persiles of Sigismunda* (1616), of which an English translation by 'M. L.' (1619) served the convenience of the English adapter. Here were to be found, more especially, names and all, the impressive episode of the mother who rather than violate the laws of hospitality, refuses to betray the slayer of her son; but the offensive sequel of her marriage with him seems to have been an addition of the dramatists'[1]. Here likewise they chanced upon the 'custom' which supplied another portion of their plot, and which the stage long continued (if it has ceased) to treasure for the delight of prurient audiences[2].

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[1] See Cleremont's speech quite near the opening of the play.

Dryden could not have chosen a more suitable illustration for his purpose than when he wrote[3] that there was more indecency 'in one play of Fletcher's, *The Custom of the Country*, than in all ours together.' Yet, in spite of its unpardonable licentiousness, this comedy is both in construction and in execution a work of consummate talent. By reason of a most ingenious, and at the same time quite perspicuous interweaving of three distinct stories upon which the author or authors had chanced in the same original, the excellences of this play are so indissolubly mixed up with its vicious elements as to make it impossible to treat its component parts otherwise than piecemeal. The 'bacchanal' passion of Hippolita cannot be condoned for the sake of the pathetic devotion of Zenocia; nor can Rutilio's bestial excesses be forgiven in consideration of his simplicity of nature. The whole production is tainted.

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[1] The actual origin of the play was first pointed out by 'J. C.' in *A Note on Cervantes and Beaumont and Fletcher*, in *Fraser's Magazine*, New Series, vol. xi, for May, 1875.—The story recurs in Giraldi Cinthio's *Hecatommithi* (vi. 6), which was formerly supposed to have been Fletcher's source. (Cf. Ticknor, vol. ii. p. 133 *note*.) It was also used by Calderon in his *Mejor está que estaba* (see G. H. Lewes, *The Spanish Drama*, p. 8). (As to the names see Koeppel. p. 65 *note*.)—Cibber's popular *Love makes a Man, or The Fop's Fortune* (1701) was founded on *The Custom of the Country* and on *The Elder Brother* (Genest, vol. ii. p. 229); part of the plot of Charles Johnson's *Country Lasses* (1715) is also derived from the former play (*ib.* p. 548).

[2] After suggesting the plot of the immortal *Mariage de Figaro*, the 'custom,' as to the actual significance of which many learned treatises have been written, has served the purposes of much buffoonery in later days.

[3] In the *Preface* to his *Fables* (1699)—(cited by Genest). As Sir Walter Scott says, 'The play is bad enough, but the assertion is a strong one.' and '... the point may be left undecided.'—The remnant of Puritanism which was never quite extinguished in the character of Pepys caused him, much to the credit of the indirect power of his conscience, to declare this 'of all the plays that ever he did see, the worst, having neither plot, language, nor anything in the earth that is acceptable.' 'Only,' he adds, 'Knipp sings a song admirably.' (*Diary*, January 2, 1667.)

Fletcher and Massinger's (?) The Laws of Candy (pr. 1647).

With regard to *The Laws of Candy* I am indisposed to go much further than Dyce, who regards the question of its authorship as undecided. Neither in theme nor in style has it any continuous resemblance to what we know as habitual to Fletcher. On the other hand, it is not easy unreservedly to accept Mr. Fleay's pronouncement in favour of Massinger's all but entire authorship of the play, which he thinks Fletcher revised for the stage. In any event, *The Laws of Candy* may be described as a romantic drama of no exceptional power; and such merits as it possesses consist chiefly in the ingenious rather than interesting contrivance of the plot. The laws of Candy (*i.e.* Candia, Crete), which give their name to the play, are twofold[1]. In the first place, whoever can convict another person of ingratitude for a benefit received from him may, unless he is himself willing to remit the penalty, demand the offender's life. Secondly, the warrior whose services in the field have by the voice of the army been approved the best, may demand his own reward on his return home. Of these laws, the latter furnishes the knot of the play, in the jealousy of a father against his son, and this part of the action is founded on a novel in the *Hecatommithi* of Giraldi Cinthio[2]. The other law, being applied as it were *ad absurdum*, brings the action to a close. Interwoven with the rest of the plot is the love-story of the imperious Princess Crota, which may have been suggested by the experiences of Phebe in *As You Like It*[3]. The personages of the play are however endowed with little intrinsic interest,—with the possible exception of Gonzalo, the intriguing Venetian magnifico, whose craft is in the end completely outwitted.

Fletcher and Massinger's The

The Spanish Curate had been generally assumed to be by Fletcher only, till the evidence of versification induced later critics to agree in assigning to Massinger the serious part of

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[1] See act i. sc. 1.

[2] x. 9.

[3] Koeppel, *u.s.*, p. 73.

Spanish Curate acted 1622: *pr.* 1647).

the action, which indeed is rather loosely combined with the comic. They are, however, both derived from the same source, as was already made clear by Dyce, viz. an English translation of a Spanish work by Gonzalo de Cespedes, published in 1622 under the title of *Gerardo the Unfortunate Spaniard*[1]. But the English dramatist or dramatists (if the latter assumption be necessary, which I am not prepared to deny[2]) showed their original power, both in adding to the comic, and in heightening the serious, interest of the play. To them—so far as has yet been ascertained at first hand—is due the most diverting of all the scenes in the play, and one which was required in order to make part of the comic action possible, viz. the scene where the waggish parish-clerk makes a mock will, in order to detain the lawyer, while Leandro is laying siege to that lawyer's daughter[3]. And they have much strengthened the interest of the serious plot in the scenes of the last two acts which turn on the unrestrained passion of Violante[4]. But apart from the fact that the exposition of the main-plot is unnecessarily lengthy, the comic force of the bye-plot renders it the most effective part of the play. Indeed, the whole of the delectable device practised upon the lawyer Bartolus is presented with so much humour—the curate and his clerk, who demand christenings, weddings, and funerals at any risk, and who are ready to believe anything true for money[5], are drawn in so genuine a spirit of fun,—and the lawyer himself is so all-round a rascal[1], that the doubtful morality of the intrigue may be overlooked. At all events, it has not interfered with the long theatrical life and influence of this brilliant comedy[2].

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[1] From the account of Ticknor, vol. iii. p. 113, it would appear that the general character of this novel is of a serious cast. The story of Bartolus, his wife, and his pupil, is however excellent in its way, and quite equal to anything of the same kind in the *Decamerone*.

[2] In view of Mr. Boyle's analysis in *Englische Studien*, vol. v. p. 90, which shows a striking divergence in the proportions both of lines with feminine endings and of run-on lines between the shares attributed to the two poets respectively. While declining to ignore such evidence, I take leave to doubt whether the time has come for constructing an absolute canon on so narrow a basis.

[3] See act iv. sc. 5, which was converted into a droll called *The Mock Testator*, performed during the suppression of the theatres. No doubt the scene partially recalls the familiar device of comic wills, of which many are to be found in literature (including Villon's masterpieces); but it is here put to a quite unique dramatic use, the joke being at last betrayed by the endlessness of the resources exhibited by the testator, as he warms to his work.

[4] This has been pointed out by Koeppel, p. 108.

[5] See act ii. sc. 2. The curate Lopez is all for the Book of Sports, and

Fletcher and Massinger's (?) The Beggars' Bush (acted 1622; pr. 1647).

The Beggars' Bush, acted at Court in 1622, was in a quarto edition of 1661 described as the joint work of Beaumont and Fletcher, and there is reason to believe that it was publicly acted as early as 1615. So far, however, as I know, nothing in this play, which has a charm of its own, warrants the suggestion that it was originally written by Beaumont and rewritten by Fletcher

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rejoices in finding that his parishioners have no longer 'Puritan hearts' and 'spurn all pastimes.' The song with which they celebrate his consent, under these circumstances, to remain their pastor, is well known (see act iii. sc. 2).

[1] In conducting an arbitration between impecunious parties he is expeditious enough:

'I have been atoning two most wrangling neighbours:
They had no money, therefore I made even' (act iii. sc. 4);

but in the suit of a paying client he takes another tone:

'I must have witnesses
Enough and ready . . . .
Substantial, fearless souls, that will swear suddenly,
That will swear anything.
Hen. They shall swear truth too.
Bar. That's no great matter: for variety
They may swear truth; else 'tis not much look'd after.' (Act iii. sc. 1.)

At the beginning of Bartolus' speech in court an everlasting forensic mannerism is not forgotten:

'*Bar.* Hum, hum—
Jan. That preface,
If left out in a lawyer, spoils the cause,
Though ne'er so good and honest.' (Act iii. sc. 3.)

[2] It was revived after the Restoration, and was seen by Pepys in 1661, '8 and '9. It was again brought on the stage in 1722. The versions produced in 1779 and 1783 seem to have been mere farces, and were in each case acted but once. An alteration brought out at Covent Garden Theatre in 1840 is stated by Dyce to have proved very attractive.—Several later plays have been supposed to be indebted for comic scenes to *The Spanish Curate.* In Dryden's *Spanish Friar* however the resemblance is limited to the husband's jealousy of his wife; the part taken in the plot by the Friar, and indeed this character itself, are wholly different. Congreve's *Old Bachelor* owes nothing at all to Fletcher's play; Fondlewife and Bartolus have no resemblance to one another. Dyce adds that he cannot discover any material likeness between *The Spanish Curate* and Bickerstaffe's *The Padlock* (1768), which latter was very successful. According to Genest (vol. v. p. 217) its plot was taken from a novel by Cervantes, *The Jealous Estremaduran.*

with the aid of Massinger[1], whose hand seems traceable in parts of it from the very opening onwards. The originality and eccentric humour of the scenes from whose supposed locality the play takes its title, accounts for the quite exceptional endurance of its popularity on the stage[2]. It is needless to dwell on such plot as the play possesses—and it is very little—or on its respectable characters, from the generous merchant of Bruges (a prince without knowing it) to the worthy but inebriate burgomaster Vandunk[3]; for the attraction which this comedy exercised was undoubtedly due to its picture of the commonwealth of beggars. Fletcher, who may have taken the first suggestion of the beggars from the gipsies of Cervantes[4], has in this instance shown a diligence in the elaboration of detail which recalls the master of all such specialising, Ben Jonson; but though the terminology of the beggars may be as accurate as their songs are characteristic and their doings amusing, there is not in truth much genuine humour in the whole business. The best passage is 'orator Higgen's' loyal address to the newly-elected king of the beggars, with its palpable parody of a passage in *Henry VIII*[1]. The comedy is to be regarded as a successful essay on its authors' part in a direction unusual with them[2].

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[1] See Mr. E. H. Oliphant in *Englische Studien*, vol. xv. pp. 356 *sqq.*; and cf. Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. ii. p. 199.

[2] The title alludes to the proverbial phrase 'to go by the Beggars' Bush,' *i. e.* on the road to ruin. (See Nares, *s. v.*; and cf. *ante*, p. 593, the visit to Beggars' Bush of Day's academical pilgrim.) A droll, *The Lame Commonwealth*, having been taken from this play, it appears to have been hawked about in this reduced condition before being reprinted in 1661 (see the title-page of that edition) and at later dates. It was revived on the stage immediately after the Restoration, and Pepys saw it in 1660, '1 and '8. It was afterwards adapted, in 1761, as an opera, *The Royal Merchant*, by J. Hall, and in 1815, under the title of *The Merchant of Bruges, or Beggars' Bush*. The author of this version was Douglas Kinnaird, and Edmund Kean acted the part of Goswin with great success. (See Hawkins' *Life of Edmund Kean*, vol. i. p. 340.) Doubtless Brome derived the notion of *The Jovial Crew, or the Merry Beggars* (1669) from Fletcher's comedy.

[3] Is he the original of the hero of Bishop's famous glee? See the close of act ii. sc. 4, where Hubert proposes to re-christen him Van-drunk; and where he maintains his political consistency even when uncertain of his legs:

'Let me go;
No man shall hold me [up], that upholds him.
Do you uphold him?
Hub. No.
Vand. Then hold me up.'

[4] Cf. *ante*, p. 508 *note*, as to Middleton and Rowley's *Spanish Gipsy*, which was acted in 1622 and may have owed something to *The Beggars' Bush*.

Fletcher and Massinger's (?) The Prophetess (acted 1622; pr. 1647).

The Prophetess (licensed in 1622), which in 1690 was still supposed to be the work of Beaumont and Fletcher, and which Dyce thought written by Fletcher only, is now by those critics who have applied the test of versification attributed to the co-operation of Fletcher and Massinger, although the treatment of the subject has little in it that seems appropriate to him. Indeed, there is not much to commend this play to the admiration of the reader, although the greatest actor of his age thought it worthy of adaptation, and the greatest poet furnished him with a prologue, and perhaps with songs for insertion in it[3]. Hastily put together—indeed the action is helped on by dumb-show as well as chorus—this play may be said to degrade by its treatment what might have proved a fine theme for a historical drama. The hero Dioclesian is represented as acting entirely under the influence and control of a benevolent prophetess or witch named Delphia; and our interest in action and characters languishes, as if we were reading a spiritualistic novel. To the spectators, however, at least in later revivals, this drama seems to have appealed on the strength of the great expenditure required by decoration and dances[1]. The best part of the play really consists in the humours of Geta—or Getianus, as he chooses to be called after rising in life in the wake of his master[2].

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[1] ‘Under him
Each man shall eat his own stolen eggs and butter,
In his own shade or sunshine.’ (Act ii. sc. 1.)

In act iii. sc. 1 one of the boors calls upon his fellows to drink ‘upsey-Dutch.’ (Cf. *ante*, p. 581, *note*.)

[2] Cf. *ante*, p. 207. Higgen's observation towards the close (act v. sc. 2), when he proposes emigration to England as a new field of labour—

‘The spirit of Bottom is grown bottomless’—

can hardly be interpreted as an allusion to the *Midsummer Night's Dream*. May not ‘bottom’ here signify simple mercantile adventure? Prig replies ‘I'll maund no more, nor cant.’

[3] Betterton's opera of *The Prophetess, or The History of Dioclesian*, an adaptation of Fletcher's play, with music by Henry Purcell, was produced in 1690, and printed in that year, and afterwards. Dryden's Prologue, which is printed in vol. x of his *Works*, was immediately prohibited, because of the tone of the allusions to King William's Irish campaign. As to the lyrics promised by Dryden for the piece, see Saintsbury's Appendix in *Works*, vol. xviii. pp. 302; the songs actually inserted seem at all events not to have been wholly Dryden's; perhaps as Professor Saintsbury suggests, he only retouched them.—*The Prophetess* was last acted for a benefit (doubtless because of the carpentry) in 1784.

Fletcher and Massinger's(?) The Sea-Voyage (acted 1622; pr. 1647).

The Sea-Voyage, licensed in 1622, has not come into our hands in a very satisfactory text; and this increases the difficulty of implicitly accepting conclusions largely resting on the application of verse-tests. The play has of late been set down to the joint composition of Fletcher and Massinger, or to the revision by Massinger of an earlier work by Fletcher[3]. Dryden in the Preface to his alteration of *The Tempest* goes too far in describing 'our excellent Fletcher's' play as 'a copy' of Shakspere's; but rightly points out that to the suggestion of the latter were due 'the storm, the desert island, and the woman who had never seen a man.' Quite apart, however, from the radical difference in manner and tone between the two plays, the plot of *The Sea-Voyage* as a whole is very unlike that of *The Tempest.* The fancy of a commonwealth of women, which constitutes the central idea of the former, is to be traced back to the Argonautic legend of Hypsipyle on Lemnos. It was reproduced in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*[4]. The incidents in act i. are compared by Dyce to those in *Calamus i.* of Warner's *Pan his Syrinx* (licensed 1584);

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[1] Cf. R. Lowe, *Thomas Betterton*, p. 138.

[2] See especially act iii. sc. 2, where Geta dispenses justice in most admired fashion in his Edile's court.

[3] The former conclusion is Mr. Boyle's, approved with some hesitation as to details by Mr. Fleay; the latter Mr. Oliphant's in *Englische Studien*, vol. xvi. pp. 151–2.

[4] Canto xx. For the learning on the subject of this legend see the Appendix *Über den geschichtlichen Grund der Sage vom Lemnischen Männermord* in Welcker, *Die Aeschylische Trilogie*, &c. (1824), where parallelisms are pointed out with the legend of the Danaides.—Spenser's Rodigund (in *Faerie Queene*, Bk. i. Cantos 4 and 5) seems rather to suggest the figure of

'Pentasilee
Which was the quene of Feminee.'

(See Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, Bk. iv; Pauli's ed., vol. ii. p. 73.)

the Black Lake which lies between the Island of the Amazons and the next land is doubtless a reminiscence of Lake Avernus, although a singularly close parallel has been pointed out in *Beowulf*[1]. The writing of this play is vivacious, especially in the scenes on shipboard and among the sailors on land; for Fletcher appears to have entered very thoroughly into the ways of sailors[2]. But it is after all an utterly extravagant invention from first to last, occasionally relieved by touches of pathos, but elsewhere degraded by coarseness of various kinds, in the way both of indecencies and of horrors (as in the scene where the heroine narrowly escapes being eaten). The revolting realism that abounds in this play, notwithstanding the fancifulness of its conception, shows very painfully the difference between a theatrical and a poetic imagination. It was not in a happy hour that *The Sea-Voyage* challenged an unavoidable comparison.

Fletcher and William Rowley's The Maid in the Mill (acted 1623; pr. 1647).

In the authorship of the comedy of *The Maid in the Mill* (acted at Court 1623[3]) William Rowley was associated with Fletcher—the two dramatists apparently contributing occasionally to the same scenes; but I abstain from any estimate of Rowley's influence, the strength of which in the direction of dramatic effect is not here very specially apparent. *The Maid in the Mill* is a work both slight in texture and feeble in conduct; although drawing into the circle of its action suggestions from the irresistible night-scene of *Romeo and Juliet*, and enlivening its progress with an elaborate application, here made early in the play, of the familiar expedient of a masque performed by amateurs[4]. Both the main-plot and the bye-plot of this comedy are taken from novels, the one being a free adaptation—more or less successfully turning the corner of the most effective situation in the original—of an episode of a Spanish romance noted above as previously used by Fletcher; the other a version of one of Bandello's tales, more edifying than the original, at least in purpose[1]. The play is disfigured by a coarseness which may or may not be attributed to Fletcher's collaborator, but which is pardonable only where it is an element in the buffoonery of Florimel's supposed brother Bustofa.

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[1] See Koeppel, p. 106.

[2] Cf. *ante*, p. 716.

[3] This comedy was likewise revived as an 'opera' after the Restoration.

[4] This device is stated to correspond very closely to that of the *Entremes del Robo de Helena* in a series of *Fiestas* by Lope de Vega not known to have been published till after his death, in 1644.

Fletcher and Massinger's ?) The Lovers' Progress (acted as a revised play 1634; pr. 1647).

The Lovers' Progress is in the Prologue to the printed play designated with the utmost distinctness as an adaptation. In a spirit of genuine modesty the adapter, while protesting that his own labour has not been a mere pretence, invites a test of the simplest kind for distinguishing between his own work and that which he found ready to his hand in the 'old piece.' He is ambitious, he says,

> 'that it should be known,
> What's good was Fletcher's, and what ill his own.'

It might seem strange that Massinger, to whom in this instance external as well as internal evidence points as the adapter, should have taken so much pains to put himself in the right as to a procedure to which he frequently resorted as a matter of course; but it is probable that he was exercised in mind by the extensiveness of the alterations which he had permitted himself, and which probably covered the whole of the last two acts, besides the opening of the play. For in the Epilogue he avows himself

> 'Still doubtful, and perplex'd too, whether he
> Hath done Fletcher right in this history.'

There is every reason for believing that the original play by Fletcher was *The Wandering Lovers*, licensed as his in December 1623; that Massinger's adaptation was the

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As to the *Gerardo* of Cespedes, the source of the story of Ismenia, see above, p. 723.—Bandello's novel (ii. 15) was translated by Paynter. According to Klein (vol. x. p. 493) this novel was also dramatised, and in a superior fashion, by Lope de Vega in his *La Quinta de Florencia*.—In *The Maid in the Mill* the virtue of Florimel, the miller's daughter, is ultimately rewarded on the same principle as Pamela's in Richardson's novel. The man who sought her love dishonourably weds her honourably; and in the play he has the further satisfaction of discovering her to be, unlike *Fair Em*, not a miller's daughter after all.—The resemblance between a scene in this play (act v. sc. 2)—the King's unwelcome visit to Otrante—and one in *The Loyal Subject* (act ii. sc. 6) may be set down as accidental.

play licensed in May 1634 under the title of *Cleander*; and that with this again was identical that entered on the Stationers' Registers in September 1653 as by Massinger under the double title of *The Wandering Lovers, or The Painter*[1].

This romantic drama, the subject of which is taken from one of the long 'heroic romances' of which the French literature of this age was so prolific[2], is distinguished by a purity and elevation of sentiment which it would be unjust to place entirely to the credit of the adapter. The moral conflict here exhibited constitutes a theme worthy of any poet's pen, and love and friendship are alike depicted under their noblest aspect. The scene in which the inner struggle between passion and duty in Calista and Lisander reaches its crisis is conceived with touching truthfulness and carried out with high dramatic power; as Lisander's self-control seems on the point of deserting him, but Calista's virtue stands true even while his sense of honour trembles in the balance, we feel that the action of this noble drama has arrived at its real height[3]. At the same time the play has its weak points. The wrath of the lascivious Clarinda on being upbraided by her virtuous mistress, whom she holds in her power, seems too slight a pivot for the plot to turn upon; while the dramatists have made but little real capital out of the ghost-episode which they found in their original, and which they might with advantage have left there. For this kind of ghost —a licensed victualler buried in unconsecrated ground and privileged to recompense the provider of a proper sepulture by announcing his death to him a few hours beforehand— is too inconsequent to be introduced into a dramatic action, however much the audience may be tickled by the ghost's posthumous summons to a good dinner, or thrilled by his punctuality when the end is near[1]. It was not in Fletcher's way to think twice about his borrowings; but if some expedient had to be found for making an end of the inconvenient Cleander, Massinger might have been expected to discover a rational way out of the difficulty before leaving this part of his predecessor's labours unreformed. All this apart, *The Lovers' Progress* is remarkable for a moral earnestness which gives a higher interest to this powerful drama; and it is pleasant to be able to associate with the glowing picture of friendship presented by this play, as well as by *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, the name of a writer, probably even better entitled than tradition asserts, to be himself remembered as a faithful friend.

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[1] The second title, which seems meaningless, was probably only due to the printer's blundering. See Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. i. p. 219, where the history of this play is discussed; and cf. *ib.* p. 227.

[2] Henry D'Audiguier's *Histoire tragi-comique de nostre temps, sous les noms de Lysandre et de Caliste*, printed without the author's name in 1615, appeared in an English translation in 1627. (A copy of this is in the Dyce Library. For an abridgement see Dyce's *Beaumont and Fletcher*, vol. xi.)

[3] This scene (act iii. sc. 3) is attributable to Fletcher according to Mr. Boyle's analysis (*Englische Studien*, vol. v. p. 88).

Fletcher and Middleton's (?) The Nice Valour, or The Passionate Madman pr. 1647).

The Nice Valour, or The Passionate Madman (printed 1647) cannot have been acted in its present form before 1634[2]. But inasmuch as already Dyce perceived in it traces of alterations by another hand, and this hand is now supposed to have been Middleton's, the play may very likely have been written by Fletcher in its original shape at an earlier date. For one reason or another, it has a rather unfinished aspect; and a large proportion of the personages are left without names—a circumstance which by no means renders it the easier to follow a not very perspicuous plot. The conception of this comedy is happier than its execution. Chamont, the hero, is a man of so passionate a sense of honour, that he can brook no insult from either foe or friend, or even from his sovereign himself. The affront which he receives from the Duke is in truth a mere trifle, and the warm goodwill which the latter has always entertained towards him continues without interruption. But nothing can comfort the wounded spirit of the offended man. Although this conception is not devoid of spirit, and the way in which Chamont is ultimately appeased by the Duke is contrived with a certain graceful ingenuity, the developement of the character must be described as virtually a failure, inasmuch as Chamont's pride is neither sufficiently ridiculous to be comic, nor sufficiently free from exaggeration to justify sympathy. No particular interest attaches to the Passionate Lord (who reminds us of Shatillion in *The Noble Gentleman*) and the unhappy lady who seeks to reclaim him by personating Cupid—under circumstances as inappropriate as those under which Madame Melina in *Wilhelm Meister* enacted Minerva. A comic foil to the proud sensitiveness of Chamont is supplied by Lapet, with his servant Galoshio[1], both of whom are of accord in their resolution to take the kicks the world provides them. The humours of these worthies are drawn out to an almost tedious length; but they have in them an element of real fun, besides illustrating clearly the opinion of Fletcher and his associate concerning the value as a social safeguard of a just sense of honour, the exaggeration of which they and their fellow-dramatists are so fond of ridiculing[2].

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[1] Koeppel, p. 124, recalls the old legend of dead men's grateful service, of which Peele made use in *The Old Wives' Tale*. The first apparition of the Ghost and his song occur in a scene (act iii. sc. 5) which seems to belong to Fletcher, the second (act iv. sc. 2), which cannot but have been as effective with a Jacobean as it would be with many a Victorian audience, in a scene apparently by Massinger.

[2] A pamphlet entitled *Fisher's Folly*, mentioned in act v. sc. 3, was first printed in 1624.—The Prologue spoken 'at the revival of this play' says, but possibly with no special meaning implied in the expression, that Fletcher's 'scenes' will give proof of his highmindedness.

This play contains a celebrated lyric which may have suggested the idea of *Il Penseroso* to Milton, and which certainly suggested to him some of its phraseology[3].

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[1] Galoshio 'has not his name for nought,' he is 'much trod upon' (act iv. sc. 1). His master, who would not be a gentleman at all but that his wife insisted on his buying a coat of arms at the Heralds' College—

'As women love these kickshaws naturally'—

has reduced his poltroonery to a system, and is author of a work entitled

'*The Uprising of the Kick,*
And the Downfall of the Duello.'

[2] The scene (act v. sc. 3) in which Lapet distributes copies of his tractate is interesting as indicating what was the popular literature of the day which 'much enriched the company of stationers.'

[3] See act iii. sc. 3. 'The Passionate Lord sings:

'Hence, all you vain delights,
As short as are the nights,
Wherein you spend your folly!
There's nought in this life sweet,
If man were wise to see't,
But only melancholy;
Oh, sweetest melancholy,' &c.

Cf. Masson's *Life of Milton*, vol. i. p. 570, and *Poetical Works of Milton*, *Fletcher, Jonson* (?), *and others' The Bloody Brother, or Rollo Duke of Normandy* (*acted* 1637; *pr.* 1639).

The Bloody Brother, or Rollo, Duke of Normandy (written after the beginning of 1624 [1], acted at Court in 1637, and printed in 1639 as 'by B. J. F.,' but in 1640, at Oxford, as by Fletcher), can hardly be held to have come down to us in its original shape; and indeed the 1639 edition bore the first, and the 1640 the second, of the above titles. Another writer, very possibly more writers than one, seem to have been at the same time or in succession engaged upon the play; Jonson has been credited with the astrological scene and its display of special learning in the fourth act, while, on the strength of the Oxford edition, Cartwright has been supposed to have finally 'reformed' the play [2]. Undoubtedly there is a general want of evenness in the execution of this striking rather than thoroughly effective tragedy, but it contains passages written in Fletcher's most advanced style [3], which contrast very markedly with some of the work of those who took his play in hand. Its life on the stage would appear to have been vigorous, but has not proved lasting [4].

vol. ii. p. 209. *Il Penseroso* and *L'Allegro* are to be regarded rather as pictures illustrating a conclusion of mental philosophy, than as lyrical effusions of the poet's mind. Fletcher's song of course has a dramatic intention, and is therefore not open to the criticism provoked by Rogers'

'There's such a charm in melancholy
I would not, if I could, be gay.'

[1] A passage in the Cook's speech (act ii. sc. 2) is imitated, as Gifford pointed out, from Jonson's masque *Neptune's Triumph*, performed on Twelfth Night, 1624.

[2] Fleay, *u. s.*, pp. 203–4. Mr. Oliphant's distribution, *u. s.*, p. 354, includes with Fletcher, Massinger, Jonson, Middleton and a fourth author. Mr. Boyle assigns it to Fletcher, Massinger, Field and another, probably Daborne.

[3] See, above all, besides Edith's scene with Rollo (act iii. sc. 1), which Dyce pronounces the most *real* in its passionate earnestness of anything in Beaumont and Fletcher's writings, her speech, act v. sc. 2, and indeed the ensuing dialogue between her and Rollo, which, as Seward thought, had evidently been written in emulation of *Richard III*, act i. sc. 2, but which in subtlety of conception is altogether inferior to that famous scene.

[4] A droll entitled *The Three Merry Boyes*, founded on the comic scenes between the Cook and his companions, whose gaiety stands them in good stead on the scaffold—see their farcical songs in act iii. sc. 2—was acted during the suppression of the theatres, and the play was one of those secretly performed at the Cockpit in the winter 1647–8. It was revived in 1661 and '8, and, according to Genest, last acted in 1708.

The opening of this play suggests many parallels in dramatic literature[1]. But it should be observed that only a small part of the action is comprised in the operating of Rollo's jealousy against Otho, and in the murder of the younger by the elder brother. The character of the mother. Sophia, sinks into insignificance in the latter part of the play, which exhibits the fatal progress of the tyrant to the doom prepared for him by his ruthless ambition. His evil genius, Latorch, hurries him on to destruction, while his good counsellor, Aubrey, plays no very interesting part till he becomes himself the object of his enemy's murderous designs; indeed, Fletcher's earlier plays furnish far more effective examples of the character of the honest plain-spoken counsellor. The resolution of Edith, the daughter of one of Rollo's victims, to become the instrument of his death, is sufficiently prepared by the previous action; and the same fault is to be found with the scene (whether or not designed in rivalry of Shakspere) in which, while luring him on to his doom, she is all but diverted from her purpose by his persuasive eloquence. Rollo has not previously shown himself as a cunning hypocrite—except in his simulation of good-will during the banqueting scene. The interest of the action is heightened by the introduction of a pack of astrologers (with names partially indicating under a thin disguise actual personages of historical notoriety), whom Latorch consults on the Duke's behalf, with the design of bringing about Aubrey's death by their warnings. This scene is written with that combination of out-of-the-way learning and drastic humour which among the Elisabethan dramatists Jonson alone habitually exhibits[2].

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[1] Cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 200, as to the story of *Gorboduc*.—Scott, who points out the resemblance of the story to the historical episode of Geta and Caracalla (see Gibbon, chap. vi), has, I think justly, taken exception to Dryden's praise of the plot of this play in the *Essay of Dramatic Poesy*. (See *Works*, vol. xv.)—Koeppel, p. 122, dwells on the close resemblance between Fletcher's play up to the death of the younger brother, and Schiller's *Braut von Messina*, and the subsequent divergence of their respective arguments.

[2] Act iv. sc. 2. Captain Bubb (De-Bube) and Fiske (La-Fiske) were connected with the Overbury murder; Bretnor (Norbret), who is also mentioned with Fiske in Jonson's *The Devil is an Ass*, was likewise a real personage.

Of the lyrics in this play, one is thought to be Shakspere's; another, of a very different kind, has also attained to popularity[1].

Fletcher and Massinger's (?) The Elder Brother (acted after Aug. 1625).

The Elder Brother, not acted until 1635, and printed as by Fletcher in 1637, was unhesitatingly assigned to him alone by Dyce; but it is now generally held to have been revised, and in part rewritten, by Massinger. Unless Fletcher was acquainted with a comedy by Calderon, said in many respects to bear a most striking resemblance to *The Elder Brother*[2], the story of this excellent play may be ascribed to his original invention. Written with extreme spirit, and containing many passages of great beauty of language, it is moreover distinguished by a power of characterisation less usual in Fletcher's works[3]. Charles, the elder of the two sons of Brisac, is despised as a bookworm by his father, who has resolved to make his younger son Eustace his heir, and at the same time to secure to him the hand of the fair Angelina. For this transaction the consent of the student himself is necessary; but the power of love, awakened by the sight of Angelina, reveals the fact that Charles is brave and manly at heart. He refuses to renounce so fair a prize; and—this is admirably conceived—his valour inspires his brother Eustace, hitherto an empty-headed courtier, with similar courage. The rivalry of the brothers ends in their jointly rescuing Angelina from the consequences of her father's anger; and the action thus comes to a pleasing close. A very original and fresh character is that of Miramont, the uncle of the brothers, who respects learning without possessing it[1], and who, after taking the part of Charles when despised, is only reconciled to Eustace on finding that he too is a youth of mettle. Even in the coarse bye-plot, the only unpleasing part of the piece, it must be allowed that moral justice is done.

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[1] As to the former ('Take, oh take those lips away,' act v. sc. 2), of which the first stanza, with certain variations, recurs in *Measure for Measure*, cf. *ante*, p. 156. The other (act ii. sc. 2) is the well-known 'Drink to-day, and drown all sorrow,' and ends with the lines,

'And he that will go to bed sober
Falls with the leaf still in October.'

[2] *The Elder Brother* was revived in 1661.—Cibber's prose-comedy of *Love Makes a Man, or The Fop's Fortune* (1701) is founded partly on this comedy, partly on *The Custom of the Country*.—Fletcher's play has been translated by Count W. Baudissin in vol. ii of *Ben Jonson und seine Schule*.

[3] Weber pointed out this resemblance to *De una Causa dos Efectos*.

Fletcher and Massinger's (?) *The Fair Maid of the Inn* (*acted* 1626; *pr.* 1647).

The Faire Maide of the Inne (printed 1647) was licensed as by Fletcher for performance at Court in January 1626. It was therefore brought out as a posthumous play, having been finished or revised by another writer. This was probably Massinger, to whose credit the opening may be placed. But later in the course of the drama yet another hand seems to become perceptible. I am not, however, prepared without further evidence to accept the theory of Jonson's collaboration; notwithstanding that the comic portions of this play, which contain in them a large element of prose, are far more elaborate than is usual with Fletcher, and abound in allusions to contemporary fashions and follies[2]. William Rowley has been likewise suggested as having had a share in the first fabrication. In any case, the admirably written opening scenes, and the clear exposition supplied by them, are not followed by an action either symmetrical in its progress or impressive as a whole. Cesario, a personage of fresh and spirited bearing in the earlier scenes, becomes tame and contemptible after misfortune has befallen him, and is manifestly not worthy of Bianca, the supposed maiden of the inn, albeit, except by virtue of one pathetic resolve[1], in herself not a very interesting heroine. As a matter of fact, the revising dramatists showed scant skill in the use to which they put the materials out of which the play is constructed[2]; but it would be absurd to hold Fletcher responsible for the general result. The central figures of the comic scenes in this play are the mountebank Forobosco and his attendant clown.

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[1] 'I have a learnèd faith, sir,
And that's it makes a gentleman of my sort.
Though I can speak no Greek, I love the sound on't,' &c.
(Act ii. sc. 1.)

The 'awakening' of Charles is charming (act iii. sc. 3):

'Andrew, she has a face looks like a story;
The story of the heavens looks very like her'—

a passage which some commentators have by no means happily attempted to improve. See also some truly poetical touches in act iii. sc. 5 and act iv. sc. 3. The passage in which Louis describes the ordinary habits of a woman of fashion (act i. sc. 1) may be compared with Davies' description of the habits of a man of fashion (quoted *ante*, vol. ii. p. 476, *note*); see especially the close:

'And so your life runs round
Without variety or action, daughter.'

[2] See in particular act iv. sc. 2, with the parallel passages in *The Alchemist* and *The Staple of News* noted by the editors. Cf. also, as to Jonsonian allusions, Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. i. p. 222.

Fletcher and another's (?) *The Noble Gentleman* (*acted* 1626; *pr.* 1647).

The Noble Gentleman, licensed in 1626 as by Fletcher and printed in 1647, was likewise a posthumous play. The Prologue spoken at a revival, while referring to the play as in fashion 'some twenty years ago,' appeals to the regard cherished for

> 'their noble memory, whose name,
> Beyond all power of death, lives in their fame.'

But, as Dyce pointed out, the evidence of this Prologue is valueless[3]; and, although the versification of this play in part seems that of Fletcher, and in part has characteristics which we may regard as proper to Beaumont, the assumption of their joint authorship is too hazardous for unconditioned acceptance; another hypothesis regards it as a play by Fletcher completed by William Rowley, possibly aided by Middleton[4].

I am not sure that this play, whatever may have been its actual history, has received a fair measure of favour from either earlier or later critics[1]. Its idea, which scarcely amounts to more than a modification of the familiar story of the *Induction* of *The Taming of the Shrew*[2], savours of farce rather than of comedy, but is carried out with considerable skill as well as humour, and so managed as to be equal to sustaining the weight of the action of an ordinary comedy. Moreover, as applied to the age for which *The Noble Gentleman* was written,—an age of *parvenus*—this idea was charged with a satirical force which must have rendered it almost dangerously effective. The hero, Mount-Marine, is a country squire smitten with the ambition of rising to greatness as a courtier, in defiance of the warnings of his friends. His money is running out in Paris, where however he is detained by an ingenious device invented by his 'witty wanton' wife. Rather than give in to his despondent proposal of a return to country retirement[3], she contrives with the help of a batch of merry friends to delude him into the belief, that by the king's favour he has been raised in swift succession to the rank of knight, baron, earl and duke. His friend Claremont, who had prudently warned him against foolish ambition, hereupon proves eager to take advantage of his good fortune—a very felicitous touch of nature. But the cleverness of the construction lies in a comic *peripeteia* extraordinary, which reduces Marine, with a speed equalling that which marked his ascent, from his dukedom of Burgundy to his original *status*[1]. In order to bring about this result, and to vary the action, the character of Shattillion is introduced, whose mind has been unhinged by love, and who fancies himself to have a claim to the crown, and to be in consequence surrounded by constant dangers. Shattillion's monomania is pictured with remarkable skill, and his cure is managed with admirable tact, and with an element of true pathos[2]. Thus, though slight in conception, this posthumous and very possibly unfinished play signally attests Fletcher's constructive talent.

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[1] See act iv. sc. 1.

[2] These were,—for the episode of Mariana, the same story as one related by Caussin in his *Cour Sainte* (1632) and transcribed at a later date into Wanley's *History of Man* (1678); for the story of Bianca, the Fair Maid of the Inn, *La Ilustre Fregona*, one of the *Novelas Exemplares* of Cervantes, which however is not closely followed in the play. Two Spanish comedies are stated to be founded on the same novel.—In act iii. sc. 1 the Host and Hostess review Bianca's 'paragraphistical suitors,' after the fashion of Portia and Nerissa in *The Merchant of Venice*, and of several similar passages in other Elisabethan plays.

[3] It is also prefixed to the 1649 quarto of *Thierry and Theodoret*.

[4] Mr. Oliphant in *Englische Studien*, vol. xv. p. 340, argues in favour of the former view, considering the play to belong to the same period as *The Woman's Prize*; Mr. Fleay, *English Drama*, vol. i. p. 222, approves the latter.—It will be noticed that in this play, as in *The Nice Valour*, more than one of the personages remain without proper names.

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[1] *The Noble Gentleman* was reproduced by D'Urfey in 1688, without adequate acknowledgment, under the title of *A Fool's Preferment, or The Three Dukes of Dunstable.* See Genest, vol. i. pp. 463-4, where Etherege's harsh censure of Fletcher's comedy is referred to. Sheridan Knowles' adaptation of *The Noble Gentleman* does not appear to have been acted.

[2] As to the (possibly historical) origin of the notion of this kind of hoax see *ante*, p. 94.

[3] Surely Sheridan must have read the scene, where Marine insists upon the necessity of taking his fashionable wife back into the country (act ii. sc. 1):

> 'Make you ready straight,
> And in that gown which you first came to town in,
> Your safe-guard cloak, and your hood suitable,
> Thus on a double gelding shall you amble,
> And my man Jaques shall be set before you.'

'I deny the butler and the coach-horse' (*The School for Scandal*, act ii. sc. 1).

Fletcher and Shirley's The Night-Walker (*acted* 1634; *pr.* 1640).

The Night-Walker, or The Little Thief, was acted in 1634, having been licensed as a work of Fletcher's corrected by Shirley, and was printed as his in 1640. We may assume that it had been left unfinished by its original author[3]. The play seems to have kept the stage for some time after the Restoration[4].

This comedy, though edifying in purpose, is the reverse of pleasing in execution. Its plot, so far as it refers to Maria and her recovery from seeming death by the robbery of the coffin to which she has been consigned, is a mixture of ghastliness and farce, the latter element being increased by her subsequent disguise as a Welsh serving-girl[5]. Her central adventure may have been derived from one of Bandello's novels translated into French by Belleforest[6]. As to the remainder of the action, it can hardly be thought a happy contrivance that the heroine Alathe should be left to the usurer Algripe, whom her tricks as the Little Thief have brought to repentance, besides safeguarding her ill-disposed brother Lurcher. This comedy has, in fact, a degenerate tone which seems to point to a further fall in manners than is noticeable even in the impurest of Fletcher's comedies previously mentioned; but if Fletcher's 'corrector' is to be held responsible for this defect, it must also be allowed that there is considerable humour in some of the comic scenes, especially in those in which Algripe's servants, engrossed by literary pursuits, leave his house unprotected, and which cannot well have been Fletcher's work [1].

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[1] Koeppel, p. 120, points out that Madam Mount-Marine's proposal to her husband to prove himself a true prince by paying a visit to the lions, has a parallel—but a serious one—in *The Mad Lover* (act iv. sc. 5). The fancy is of course a familiar one. ('Beware instinct,' says Falstaff; 'the lion will not touch the true prince.')

[2] See act v. sc. 1 *ad fin.*

[3] The hypothesis that *The Night-Walker* is an alteration by Shirley of an earlier drama by Fletcher entitled *The Devil of Dowgate, or Usury put to Use*, which seems in itself improbable—for why should Shirley have omitted all reference to the popular source of the play adapted by him?—is, I observe, rejected by Mr. Fleay, on the evidence of the names of the companies who respectively performed the two plays. Cf. *ante*, p. 693, as to *Wit at Several Weapons*.

[4] It was acted in 1682, and again in 1705.

[5] This recalls the disguise of Luce as a 'Dutch frow' in *The London Prodigal*.

[6] See Koeppel, p. 126.

Other extant and non-extant plays connected with the names of Beaumont and Fletcher, or of either alone.

I am not aware that more than a single play has been on reasonable evidence attributed to Beaumont and Fletcher, or to either of the two dramatists alone, that was not included in one or the other of the two Folios published with their joint names.

Beaumont (?) *and Fletcher's* (?) *The Faithful Friends* (*entered* 1660).

The Faithful Friends, entered as by Beaumont and Fletcher in the Stationers' Registers in June 1660, was first printed by Dyce from a MS. which had passed into his possession. The fact that this play was not included in the First, or even in the Second, Folio, seems hardly sufficient without further evidence to warrant the assumption that Beaumont and Fletcher were alike without any concern in it. But neither writer is to be traced with any certainty in the text, while the most striking features of Fletcher's style are conspicuously absent. If Massinger had a hand in the play, this would account for its containing a political allusion which is far more likely to have been due to him than to either of the two writers to whom the play was first ascribed [2]. The conjecture that its author was

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[1] This seems to result from the reference in act iii. sc. 4 to Prynne's *Histrio-mastix* (1633). The previous scene, where Lurcher and Alathe appear as book-hawkers, is curious as giving instances of the popular books and ballads of the day.

[2] See act i. sc. 1:

> 'Alexander the Great had his Hephaestion,
> Philip of Spain his Lerma; *not to offend,*
> *I could produce from courts that I have seen*
> *More royal precedents.*'

Robert Daborne, a prolific playwright of whose personal experiences more is known than of his works, fits in with another conjecture, as to the date of its original production[1].

This romantic drama, by whomsoever it was written, is a spirited and stirring production, though of a by no means exceptional type. Its plot is a David-and-Urias intrigue playing at the court of Titus Martius, King of Rome, and in the country of the Sabines; but historical names are dealt with in a spirit of reckless freedom. The characterisation is vigorous rather than subtle, as in the instance of the villain of the piece, Rufinus, while Titus Martius recalls the King in *The Maid's Tragedy*. Incidental passages possess considerable beauty[2]; but assuredly Laelia, who accompanies Marcus Tullius to the wars as a page (oddly called Janus), would have been invested with more pathos by Fletcher than is actually discoverable in the character. Nor can much original humour be said to distinguish the comic scenes, of which the braggart knight Sir Pergamus and his dwarf Dindimus are the heroes[3].

In the same month of the same year 1660 was entered in the Stationers' Registers as by Beaumont and Fletcher a play called *The Right Woman*. It was thought by Dyce that the play of *A Very Woman, or The Prince of Tarent,* which was licensed in 1634 and printed in 1655 as by Massinger and will be noticed below under his plays, was a *rifacimento* of this earlier play; but though Fletcher's hand seems traceable in portions of the later play, their identity is from the nature of the case extremely improbable. It is more likely[4] that *A Very Woman* was founded upon a play acted in 1624 and entered in the Stationers' Registers in 1653 under the name of *The Spanish Viceroy, or The Honour of Women*[1]. Together with *The Right Woman* was entered, as by Beaumont alone, *The History of Mador* (*Madoc*?) *King of Britain*, concerning which nothing further is known[2].

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[1] Mr. Fleay thinks that the passage cited in the previous note, and the mention in the same scene of 'the great nuptial,' allude to Somerset and his marriage in December 1613, and that the play was written in 1614, when Daborne was in Henslowe's employ. See *English Drama*, vol. i. pp. 200-1, and cf. *ib.* pp. 75 *seqq.* for notes of the theatrical career of Robert Daborne, who left off writing for the stage by the year 1616, and whose name will be again mentioned below.

[2] See particularly the very fine description of Philadelpha dancing (act iv. sc. 3).

[3] The notion is however good of Sir Pergamus hanging up his arms before the statue of Mars, similar vows being offered by Blacksnout the Smith to Vulcan, and by the Tailor and the Shoemaker to Mercury. (Act iv. sc. 5.)

[4] Cf. Fleay, *English Drama,* vol. i. p. 228.

Supposed association of Shakspere and Fletcher as dramatists.

Of very different interest is the association of Fletcher's name with Shakspere's in the supposed authorship of not less than three plays. But of *The History of Cardenio*, which was entered under their joint names in the Stationers' Registers in 1653, nothing is actually known, and even its identity with a play acted more than once at Court in 1613 under the designation of *Cardano* or *Cardema*—or some name of similar sound—is open to question[3]. The entry is devoid of the slightest value as evidence. The story of the play, we may assume, was derived from *Don Quixote*.

In the two remaining instances internal evidence either supplements or takes the place of external.

Fletcher and Shakspere's (?) *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (*pr.* 1634).

I cannot here return to the question of the authorship of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, which was discussed at length in a previous chapter, without any pretence of the establishment of a satisfactory conclusion. But no mere profession of opinion seems to me to form a valuable contribution to a controversy which is already so overburdened with assertion and counter-assertion. In the absence of convincing evidence it seems right to decline being forced into subscribing to the cardinal proposition that Shakspere's hand and no other is traceable in the main portions of the first, and in passages of the last, act of this play, which is admittedly far from homogeneous in its several parts. If no imperative internal reason exists for ascribing these sections of the work to Shakspere, the external evidence as to his collaboration, which from a biographical point of view remains improbable, may without hesitation be left aside. The one other dramatist who has been suggested with any degree of probability as joint author with Fletcher of *The Two Noble Kinsmen* is Massinger. Now, it is impossible to deny that a highly plausible case has been made out for him, and that in particular passages Massinger is more Shaksperean, and therefore more liable to be mistaken for Shakspere, whether in form of verse or in turn of thought, than any other contemporary dramatist of whose independent writings we have sufficient means of judging. But the question is not one of details; the mighty tragic sweep of the first act of this play has no parallel in anything known with certainty to be Massinger's; and the external evidence in his favour of his authorship of a play published in his lifetime as Fletcher and Shakspere's virtually *nil*[1].

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[1] The second title under which *A Very Woman* was entered was *The Woman's Plot;* and a play so named was acted at Court in 1621. Mr. Boyle thinks that *A Very Woman* may have been in part founded upon this; but Mr. Fleay believes that the second title in the Stationers' entry was a blunder, and that the two plays had no connexion with one another.

[2] Mr. Fleay, *u.s.*, vol. ii. p. 335, says it was 'absurdly' ascribed to Beaumont.

[3] I have already indicated that I feel unable to accept Mr. Fleay's conjecture as to the further identity of this play with *Love's Pilgrimage*, founded upon the disguised Leocadia's transitory boast that she is 'Francisco, son to Don Henriques de Cardinas.'—It is hardly worth while to refer to the notion that this was the play attributed by Theobald to Shakspere, and adapted by him under the title of *The Double Falsehood, or The Distressed Lovers* (1728), which is founded on the Don Cardenio story in *Don Quixote*. Dyce, following Farmer, thought the original play, which unfortunately is not preserved, to have been written by Shirley.

Printed in 1634 with these great names, *The Two Noble Kinsmen* was after the Restoration altered (probably by D'Avenant) under the title of *The Rivals*, and so brought again on the stage and printed in 1668[2]. But after this there is no trace of its having been performed, and the revived interest in the work has been literary only.

Yet besides abounding in poetic beauties, this play solves, on the whole most successfully, the difficult problem of transforming an epical narrative into a drama, chiefly by the legitimate method of developing the characterisation.

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[1] I have already referred to Mr. R. Boyle's most ingenious—though to my mind not convincing—argument in his paper on *Massinger and The Two Noble Kinsmen* in the *New Shakspere Society's Transactions* (1882–6).

[2] It seems to have held the stage as a favourite play from 1662 to 1665. Pepys saw it on September 10, 1664, and thought it, apart from the acting and singing, 'no excellent play.'

The main story[1] is that of Chaucer's *Knightes Tale*; and in the general conduct of the plot the divergences are slight. There is no indication that the play was based on any earlier drama on the same subject—whether Richard Edwardes' *Palaemon and Arcyte*, acted before Queen Elisabeth in 1566[2], or a piece called *Palamon and Arsett* (according to Henslowe's spelling), repeatedly acted at the Newington Theatre in 1594, and therefore probably known to Shakspere[3]. The Prologue to *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, indeed, distinctly ascribes the origin of the play to Chaucer, while deprecating any comparison between his art and that to which the dramatic version can lay claim, and the *Epilogue* reasserts the fidelity of the play to its original. Chaucer's poem itself was in its turn founded on the *Teseida* of Boccaccio, of which however it was by no means a mere translation[4]. The drama inevitably reduces the time occupied by the action of the poem; it omits, likewise inevitably, many of Chaucer's vivid descriptions (*e.g.*, that of the three temples and many of the details of the tournament), and discreetly abbreviates the conduct of the catastrophe. It leaves aside altogether, except in the incidents of the temple-scenes[5], the supernatural machinery, skilfully introduced into the action of the poem. On the other hand, the drama contains much that may be unhesitatingly set down as proper to itself. It substitutes for Chaucer's description of the two cousins, silently arming one another for their mutual combat, an interchange between them of speech singularly effective in its excess of courtesy—that virtue of which no age can form an estimate from the example of its own degeneracy[6]. What is of more importance, it developes with greater fulness the character of Emily, which Chaucer treats rather lightly[1]; and introduces the entirely new figure, pathetic or rather hyper-pathetic, of the Jailor's Daughter, whose love, though it liberates Palamon from prison, remains unrequited. The earlier scenes, where the poor child discloses her hopeless but unconquerable passion, are touching, nor is her loss of reason depicted without power; but, not to dwell on reminiscences, which go near to caricaturing Ophelia and parodying the most awful scene in *Macbeth*, this episode is drawn out at intolerable length, and is in the end degraded. The comic element in the play is notably slight, being confined in the main to a scene[2] not devoid of reminiscences both of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and, more particularly, of *Love's Labour's Lost*; for the schoolmaster Gerrold is one of the copies of Holofernes. The climax of the action is inevitably reserved for the last act; but the nobility of much of the writing cannot reconcile us to the dramatic insufficiency of the close, of which we cannot here, as with the aid of Chaucer's opportune philosophy in the poem, lay the blame on the unequal dealings of Destiny. Dramatic justice, which must move within its own limits, required that Palamon should rejoin Arcite in death, and Emily become the victim of too great a burden of love. With all its power and all its charms, the main structure of this drama is unequal to the magnificent portal of its first act.

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[1] As to the sources of the plot see the Introduction to Mr. H. Littledale's edition of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, published for the New Shakspere Society, 1876–85, *Part II*, pp. 9* *seqq*.

[2] Cf. *ante*, vol. i. p. 211.

[3] See *Diary*, pp. 41 *seqq*. There is no likelihood that this piece had anything to do with Edwardes' academical production.

[4] Of the lines composing it only an eighth part or less are said to be translated from the Italian.

[5] Act v. scc. 1–3.

[6] Act iii. sc. 6; and cf. Spenser's conception of courtesy (*Faerie Queene*, Bk. vi, introd. st. 4).

Fletcher and Shakspere's (?) and Massinger's (?) Henry VIII.

As to *Henry VIII*, I have already[3] stated my opinion that the internal evidence in favour of Fletcher's share in the composition of this play seems to me irresistible. I have further confessed myself unable to resist the impression that Massinger in this instance co-operated with Fletcher, and that only a small proportion of the play was contributed, or incorporated from what had already been written, by Shakspere. So far as Fletcher is concerned—for it can hardly be asserted that the same proposition would hold good of Massinger—the evidence of form seems at least plausibly supported by the treatment of the matter of the play.

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[1] Indeed in one passage he applies to her a genial cynicism not unusual with him, when in a mood of 'heresie ayenst the law' of Love:

'For women, as to speken in commune,
They folwen all the favour of fortune.'

Mr. Boyle, who, in the paper above cited, presses I think too far the evidence of supposed illustrations in this play of Massinger's 'low ideal of female nature,' might have omitted Emilia's sensuous description of her own youthful charms, which amounts merely to an instance of obliviousness on the part of the writer.

[2] Act iii. sc. 5.

[3] Cf. *ante*, pp. 205 *seqq.*

Fletcher's share in plays attributed to other dramatists.

With Massinger, as has been seen, Fletcher beyond all reasonable doubt joined in the composition of a considerable number of plays, while it is almost equally certain that others originally written by him were 'reformed' by Massinger. Jonson occasionally descended into the arena, leaning on the younger arm; Middleton, Field, William Rowley, Daborne, and perhaps others whose work is now obscurer even than his, gave assistance to the most brilliant of their contemporary fellow-dramatists. Lastly, Shirley, who in 1647 prefaced with eloquent if exaggerated praise the First Folio edition of the works of Beaumont and Fletcher, when it was offered by a band of notable actors to an age in which the theatre had been so much out-acted, had likewise with a sympathetic hand revised or partly rewritten some of Fletcher's plays on the occasion of their revival—with the result of being at times prejudiced in his title to what he claimed as his own[1]. It is very possible that in some of the works ordinarily attributed to one or more of these various authors the methodical enquiries of modern criticism may come to recognise the hand of Fletcher, where it has not been recognised before. For no hand was ever less in the habit of disguising its own touch, familiar to nearly a quarter of a century of playwrights and playgoers. But on the whole it seems unlikely that the list of plays included in this chapter as entirely or in part assignable to Fletcher will be materially increased[2].

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[1] See below as to *The Coronation*, printed as Fletcher's in 1640; but distinctly asserted by Shirley to be his own and to have been 'falsely ascribed to Jo. Fletcher' in the list of his pieces appended to *The Cardinal* in 1652. See Dyce's *Shirley*, vol. i, Introduction, p. xxxii. See *ib.* p. xlvi *note*, the *Address to the Reader* cited in the text.

[2] As to the comedy of *The Widow*, printed in 1652 as by Jonson, Fletcher and Middleton, but probably by Middleton alone, cf. *ante*, p. 520.—Mr. Boyle's conjecture that Fletcher was concerned in *A New Way to pay Old Debts* will be noticed below.—Mr. Fleay, p. 223, thinks that *The Orator, or*

Lost plays by Fletcher.

It only remains to note among non-extant plays associated with his name, in addition to those already mentioned either as lost or as embodied in later plays extant under other names[1], *The Jeweller of Amsterdam, or The Hague*, entered on the Stationers' Registers in April 1654 as by Fletcher, Field and Massinger, and supposed by Mr. Fleay to refer to the murder, not long before the play was produced, of a jeweller named Wely at the Hague[2].

Beaumont and Fletcher's facile productivity;

The first comment occurring to any reader of the series of plays which posterity was so long contented to accept as the fruits of Beaumont and Fletcher's literary partnership as dramatists, can hardly fail to be an expression of amazement at the productive power to which such a wealth of glittering fruit—*Hesperidum mala*—owed its origin. Although but a small proportion of these plays can be attributed to the joint authorship of the pair, the whole body of them seems a product of the same season of joyous fertility; tragic and comic themes, alternating from first to last with a versatile capriciousness which it would be futile to attempt to explain away—or to explain at all,—mould themselves with equal facility into the dramatic form; and, with the possible exception of the very first play on the list, in which it is difficult to recognise the authorship of more than one of the partners[3], there is nowhere to be found the slightest indication of any labour either of construction or of composition. The writers take their materials where they find them, never seeming to pass by a story, a situation, a character that strikes them as interesting, novel or effective, but trusting to their inspired audacity,

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The Noble Choice, a play licensed as by Massinger in 1635, represents a revision and completion of a play by Fletcher to be identified with *The Elder Brother* (cf. *ante*, p. 736).

[1] Viz. *A Very Woman; The History of Cardenio; The Devil of Dowgate, or Usury put to Use; The Wandering Lovers; The Honour of Women.*

[2] Cf. *English Drama*, vol. i. p. 202, and see *Stationers' Registers* for June 5, 1656, where a prose-tract on the subject is entered under the title of *The true narracon of the Confession of 2 murthers* [*by*] *John de Paris and John de la Vigne on the person of John de Wely.*

[3] *The Woman-Hater.*

before it is supplemented by intuitive experience, for the synthesis of each play.

not more than partially accounted for by their breeding.

It would certainly be not so much an inadequate as an erroneous explanation of this very extraordinary achievement, were we to look upon Beaumont and Fletcher in the light of gentlemen who wrote at ease, and whose genius soared or sauntered according to its own will or whim, and without any thought of taking trouble. In the first place, had they been mere *dilettanti* of this description, their condescending to authorship would not have carried them far. In their own age, indeed, the Sir John Daws might have respected them as 'of the wits that write verses, and yet are no poets,' instead of contemptuously ranking them among those that 'are poets that live by it, the poor fellows that live by it[1].' The 'jeerers,' like Dr. Almanac, might have judged them 'no great scholars; they write like gentlemen[2];' and Ben Jonson himself, instead of cherishing, as he seems to have done, an active goodwill towards them, might have bitterly reckoned their success another proof that 'they who have saluted Poetry on the by, and now and then tendered their visits, she hath done much for, and advanced in the way of their own professions,' while her 'old clients, or honest servants,' are 'bound by their place to write and starve[3].' But there is no trace of any disposition or affectation of the kind in Beaumont and Fletcher; and as to the latter, who so long survived his companion, it is quite manifest that he worked for his living, like Thomas Heywood or like Shakspere himself. Such exceptional facility as Beaumont and Fletcher possessed in dramatic writing was not due to anything unusual in the outward conditions of their work.

On the other hand, they were no doubt both born in the higher, although by no means in one of the highest, ranks of society; both were well educated, and both must have moved with ease, and as equals, among the gently born and bred. They had thus undergone a training which it is at all times difficult to acquire by study or observation from the outside, and which could not fail to be of advantage to them under more than one aspect of their labours as dramatists. Moreover, in so far as they appealed to the tastes and sympathies of those who belonged to their own class, they were thus at the outset likely to be in surer and more instinctive sympathy with their audience.

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[1] *The Staple of News* (act iv. sc. 1).

[2] *Epicoene* (act ii. sc. 1).

[3] *Discoveries* (*Censura de poetis*).

Beaumont and Fletcher fortunate in the period of the beginnings of their careers.

A far greater importance, however, attaches to the fact that the beginnings of their careers as dramatists fell in a period when the dramatic art of their predecessors already furnished them with examples of consummate excellence. On the threshold of their literary lives we find both of them as friends and admirers of Ben Jonson, some at least of whose masterpieces must in date of production have preceded their earliest dramatic efforts. Of his manner their plays are by no means without reminiscences, even where there is no reason for suspecting his own composition[1]. The liberally imparted experience of the most painstaking and the most conscientious of our Elisabethan dramatists could not fail to apprise them of much that it was desirable to follow, while the quick wit of the younger generation to which they heart and soul belonged, could not fail to indicate to them some features in their didactic senior that it was advisable to avoid. A familiar acquaintance on their part with Shakspere's plays, of which nearly all were before the world when they began to write, was equally a matter of course; and is incontestably proved by an abundance of conscious or unconscious reminiscences, quotations, allusions, or parodies[2]. Beaumont and Fletcher had therefore before their eyes the best models of effective dramatic composition on the national stage, and a long interval not to be measured merely by years separates them from the infancy of the Elisabethan drama. From its methods and ways their own have entirely emancipated themselves; and productions of a later date deferring to what these poets deem obsolete tastes they ridicule as with a conscious sense of superiority[1].

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[1] See above as to *The Elder Brother.*

[2] Some of these passages and phrases, most of which have been noted by the editors, occur in *The Loyal Subject* (act i. sc. 3); *Valentinian* (act iii. sc. 1); *The Humorous Lieutenant* (act iii. sc. 2); *Bonduca* (act iii. sc. 1); *The Captain* (act ii. sc. 1); *The Lover's Progress* (act iii. sc. 3); *A King and No King* (act iii. sc. 2, and act iv. sc. 3); *Love's Pilgrimage* (act i. sc. 2); *The Little French Lawyer* (act iv. sc. 4); *The Knight of Malta* (act iv. sc. 1); *The Sea-Voyage* (act ii. sc. 2); *Love's Cure* (act ii. sc. 1); *The Fair Maid of the Inn* (act i. sc. 1); besides quotations of a parodistic character in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (Induction); *The Woman's Prize* (act v. sc. 3); *The Scornful Lady* (act ii. sc. 2); *The Beggars' Bush* (act ii. sc. 1); *The Noble Gentleman* (act v. sc. 1). I have not thought it necessary to exclude from the above passages that may be from the hand of Massinger, which, as has been said, was 'steeped in Shakspere.'—Incidentally, it may be noted

Range and sources of their subjects.

The experience of which Beaumont and Fletcher were thus able to avail themselves, together with the resources open to them by reason of their more liberal training, furnished them with an unusually wide range of subjects for dramatic treatment. As to the choice of such subjects indeed they seem never to have been at a loss. Their tastes did not lead them in the direction of the national history; for the historic drama as it had been begun by Shakspere's predecessors and elaborated by Shakspere himself they had little liking; and although he at least in one instance resorted to the chronicler who had furnished Shakspere with so abundant a store of materials for his Histories, Fletcher on another occasion mentions Holinshed with undisguised contempt[2]. Nor again, where he uses materials of ancient history, is he like Shakspere content with the authority of Plutarch; but though abstaining from honest Ben's unceasing display of learning. both Fletcher and his associate show traces of classical and later Latin reading at first hand[3]. They seem to have been likewise acquainted

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that Beaumont and Fletcher, like Shakspere, are remarkably fond of metaphors taken from the art of falconry.

[1] See *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*. Passages in *The Spanish Tragedy* are of course parodied by Beaumont and Fletcher, as by nearly every other of the later Elisabethans. The absence of dumb-shows from a play so full of martial movement as *Bonduca* offers a striking testimony of advance.

[2] See *The Elder Brother*, act ii. sc. 1, where Miramont, an old gentleman who, notwithstanding his imperfect education, has a respect for sound learning, rails in the following style:

'Thou art an ass, then,
A dull old tedious ass; thou 'rt ten times worse
And of less credit, than dunce Hollingshed,
The Englishman, that writes of shows and sheriffs.'

[3] Compare *Anthony and Cleopatra* with *The False One*, which shows a close acquaintance with Lucan.—See also *The Woman-Hater*.—*Bonduca* was probably founded directly on Holinshed, with or without reference to his source, Tacitus.

with early sources of French history; but it was not in such directions as this that their attention by preference turned[1].

Chaucer[2], Spenser[3], and Sidney's *Arcadia*[4] were ready to their hands, together with such a collection as Paynter's *Palace of Pleasure*[5]. It was probably through the medium of Sidney that they were indebted to Montemayor's *Diana*, although of the latter an English translation had been published in 1598. Nor can it be doubted that Fletcher at least was well-read in Italian, as is shown by his imitation of Guarini[6] and his use of an episode in the *Orlando Furioso*[7]. The novels of Giraldi Cinthio[8] he probably read in the original; the tales of Bandello[9] and those in the *Decamerone*[10] he and his companion might have found to their hands in French and in English translations. He also in one instance found his materials in a romance by Lope de Vega[11], and in another in one of those recent French romances *de longue haleine* upon which more frequent inroads were to be made by the English dramatists of another generation[12].

With Spanish literature the familiarity of Beaumont and Fletcher has always been supposed to have been specially great; but it is probable that on this head a good deal has been taken for granted. No doubt many of their plots are borrowed from Cervantes—partly from *Don Quixote*[13], partly from the *Novelas Exemplares*[14], and in one instance from a long and less known romance[15]. There is no internal proof that they had not used Shelton's English translation of *Don Quixote* which appeared in 1612; but it is difficult to see why the publisher of *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* should have gone out of his way to make an assertion to the contrary[1]. The *Novelas Exemplares* were printed in a French translation by de Rosset and D'Audiguier in 1614–5, and the *Persiles and Sigismunda* in an English translation in 1619[2]. Besides Cervantes, Beaumont and Fletcher put under contribution for their plots two later Spanish writers of fiction, Gonzalo de Cespedes[3] and Mateo Aleman[4]. Thus their acquaintance with the Spanish language, and later Spanish literature, is removed beyond all doubt. A not unfrequent use of Spanish phrases in several plays[5] would also seem to imply a more or less familiar knowledge of the Spanish tongue. On the other hand, it is singular that Beaumont and Fletcher should, so far as I can gather, have borrowed little or nothing from the Spanish drama directly. It behoves me to speak on this subject with diffidence; but I can perceive no indication that Beaumont and Fletcher knew much or anything of the plays of Cervantes, Lope de Vega, and their contemporaries. Neither plots nor characters can be traced to these sources; and where it would have been almost impossible for them, had they read, not to borrow, they do not seem to have done so[6]. It should moreover be remembered that no plays by

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[1] *Thierry and Theodoret.*

[2] *The Two Noble Kinsmen; The Triumph of Honour.*

[3] *The Faithful Shepherdess.*

[4] *Philaster.*

[5] *The Triumph of Death; The Maid of the Mill.*

[6] *The Faithful Shepherdess.*

[7] *The Sea-Voyage.*

[8] *The Laws of Candy.*

[9] *The Triumph of Death; Monsieur Thomas; The Night-Walker.*

[10] *The Knight of Malta; Women Pleased.*

[11] *The Pilgrim.*

[12] *The Lovers' Progress.*

[13] *The Knight of the Burning Pestle; The Coxcomb; The History of Cardenio.*

[14] *The Queen of Corinth; The Chances; The Island Princess; A Wife for a Month; Love's Pilgrimage.*

[15] *The Custom of the Country.*

Whether Spanish plays?

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[1] This play, hurriedly written, was printed in 1613 with a statement by the printer that he had had it by him for two years, and that it was 'elder of' the translation by above a year. *The Coxcomb* cannot be proved to have been acted before 1612-3.

[2] Koeppel, *u. s*, pp. 99-100. No work of Cervantes besides the above and *Don Quixote* appears to have been translated into English before 1640. (See Ticknor, vol. ii. p. 123.)

[3] *The Spanish Curate; The Maid of the Mill.*

[4] *The Little French Lawyer.*

[5] *E. g. Love's Cure.*

[6] Cf. G. H. Lewes, *The Spanish Drama* (1846): 'We must not exaggerate the extent of this acquaintance with the Spanish Drama. . . . We have every reason to believe the novelists to have been the great filters through which these imitations have been strained.' I have arrived at the conclusion stated above after an examination of the analyses of the plays of the Spanish dramatists in question in the ninth and tenth volumes of Klein's elaborate work, and of Grillparzer's notes on Lope referred to below. Had the authors of *The Scornful Lady* been acquainted with Lope's *Los Milagros del Desprecio*, they could hardly have failed to betray the fact. So, again, a comparison between the madhouse-scenes in *The Pilgrim* and those in the same author's *Los Locos de Valencia* will hardly lead to the conclusion that

Cervantes were published till 1615, while those of Lope published with his own consent did not, so far as we know, appear before 1619[1], by which time Beaumont had been dead three years, and Fletcher's manner as a dramatist had long been fully formed.

Beaumont and Fletcher and Lope de Vega.

Under these circumstances it may seem of comparatively slight importance to dwell on such reflexions of the contemporary Spanish drama as have been found in the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher and their contemporaries, inasmuch as there is no reason to suppose that either the Spanish or our own dramatic literature at this period directly influenced the other to any considerable extent. Yet the relations between Spanish and English life were probably closer in this period than in any other; and if to no large extent directly, yet indirectly through the literature of Spanish novels, and to some extent also no doubt by the personal intercourse of individuals. the ways of thought and life which find their expression in the drama of Lope and his contemporaries unmistakeably affected the English drama. Lope's purpose as a dramatist was not to follow in the steps of any particular predecessor—for he had no footprints but those of infancy before him; but rather to meet the multitudinous demands made upon his inventive powers by a public ever craving for novel impressions, and the stronger and stranger the better. Hence a survey of his plays—or even of a few handfuls of them—presents the most extraordinary medley of themes, and of treatments, to all of which he applied himself with the same inexhaustible readiness of resource, passing from the natural to the supernatural, from private to public life, from legend to history—in which last his heart seems to have lain—with a pen that knew no rest[2].

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the scenes in the English play were suggested by the Spanish. Cf. Klein, vol. x p. 210; vol. ix. p. 568; and see some further remarks on the general subject of the influence of Spanish upon English dramatic literature, *infra*.

[1] Ticknor, vol. ii. p. 124; 203, *note*.

[2] Cf. Ticknor, vol. ii. p. 205 *seqq.*, and especially Grillparzer's extremely interesting study of Lope in vol. viii of *Sämmtliche Werke* (1874), where will be found analyses of a large number of his plays.—For an attempt at classification of the various dramatic species represented among these see that of the Spanish critic Don Alberto Lista, quoted by Klein, vol. ix. p. 636 *note*. A useful prose translation of selected plays by Lope has been published by M. Eugène Baret.

Among the dramatic species to which he was a contributor, apart from the *Comedias Pastoriles*, to which Fletcher's *Faithful Shepherdess* corresponds, the *Comedia Heroica* (or *Historial*) and the *Comedia de Capa y Espada* seem to offer the nearest analogies to the species principally affected by Beaumont and Fletcher. The latter in particular furnishes a parallel to their favourite kind of productions. 'It took its name,' says the historian of Spanish literature[1], 'from the circumstance that its principal personages belong to the genteel portion of society, accustomed, in Lope's time, to the picturesque national dress of cloaks and swords[2]. . . . Its main and moving principle is gallantry—such gallantry as existed in the time of the author. The story is almost always involved and intriguing, and almost always accompanied with an under-plot and parody on the characters and adventures of the principal parties, formed out of those of the servants and other inferior personages.' Except in the case of the last-named detail, which was not till afterwards to become the wearisome inheritance of the modern stage in general, this description applies to a large number of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays. The double plot is with them almost a *sine qua non*, though it is not usually of the kind favoured by Lope, but is frequently devoid of any real connexion with the main plot. The tragedies of Beaumont and Fletcher bear a less special resemblance to those of Lope of which I possess any knowledge. His 'philosophical' or 'ideal' comedies[3]—the species which Calderon afterwards perfected—are a purely Spanish growth.

It would not I think be difficult to find other analogies between the dramatic qualities of Lope and those of the English dramatists now under review—from the restrictedness of some of their ethical ideals to the wild extravagance of their humorous fancies. But the truth seems to be that when authors, and more especially dramatic authors, dedicate the genius with which they are endowed to the reception and reproduction of the ideas and sympathies of their age, that genius gradually assimilates itself to the material with which it works. Beaumont and Fletcher's unrivalled popularity in their own times, and in those immediately ensuing, explains itself to a great extent from this very fact.

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[1] Ticknor, vol. ii. p. 207.

[2] The custom of wearing swords was being discontinued in England; as appears from Fletcher's reprobating their disuse. See *The Elder Brother*, act ii. sc. 1; and *The Custom of the Country*, act ii. sc. 3, cited by Dyce.

[3] '*La filosofica ó ideal.*' Lista, *ap.* Klein, *in loc. cit.*

Their early popularity in part explained by their agreement with their times.

It was the reverse of a great age for which they wrote. The reaction that is wont to follow upon a period of great and conscious national effort was now at work, and this was not the fault of James I or of the agents of his rule. But it was their fault as well as their misfortune that the higher aspirations which were still alive in the people seemed out of harmony with the current of affairs, and that the nobler impulses in the hearts of the younger generation were allowed as it were to waste themselves unused. The loyalty with which the nation had looked up to Queen Elisabeth as the incarnation of the mighty movement within it could not possibly be laid at the feet of her successor; in place thereof was paid to the King the tribute exacted by the political doctors of the Right Divine, of whom he was himself one of the most clamorous, together with the hyperbolical compliments supposed to be the due of his personal wisdom. In estimating the depth of the division which was silently forming itself in the nation, and the bitterness with which men of a freer spirit were beginning to look upon the servility proffered to the throne even by wisdom, learning and experience, it is worth while to remember what the sentiment of loyalty signifies in the mouths of such writers as Beaumont and Fletcher. It consists of an unfaltering belief in the sanctity of a king's person and the authority of his rights as rising above all other considerations;—it means the abandonment of the aspiration for freedom as part of the sense of manhood;—it is slavery draping itself with chivalrous dignity in the cloak of 'the Emperor's loyal general,' or in the mantle of the Spanish grandee[1].

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[1] If these expressions seem too strong, the scene in *Valentinian* (act i. sc. 3) may be compared, not as a solitary, but as perhaps the most striking example of Fletcher's political views; and it may at the same time be noted that Beaumont's special devotion to the theory of the Right Divine has been held to be a distinctive mark of the passages assignable to him in the joint plays of the two poets.—It was after marking the passage in *Valentinian*

Happily, this subjection of sentiment is not absolutely unbroken; and the climax of *The Maid's Tragedy* implies something like a repugnance to the principle of tyranny all the more notable, because so far as we know the youthful dramatists had owed the story of this play to no other invention but their own.

Their treatment of the relations between man and woman.

In another field of ethics, which it is impossible in the present connexion to pass by, we shall hardly be able to deny that it was again not given to Beaumont and Fletcher to rise above the spirit of their age. There is no necessity for instituting a comparison between the tone and standard of morality which prevailed in and around the Court of James I and those of previous and succeeding periods; moreover, we know that at no period of our history are the ways of the Court to be regarded as representative of the principles or the practice prevailing in other spheres of the national life. But the influence of those ways could not be other than great in an age which still clung to ideals of personal government; and the dramatists adapted their creations to the unwritten code of manners which found favour with the surroundings of the throne. Of the Court of James I nothing more need be said than that it took but little pains to cover its shamelessness. Beaumont and Fletcher seem devoid of the conception of female purity, which is a poet's solitary safeguard against becoming the thrall of the corrupt longings of his public, or of the frailty of his own imagination. In this negative censure I think both poets must alike be included, while the graver charge of a confusion between right and wrong in the treatment of the relations between the sexes, to which Fletcher is obnoxious, can hardly be applied to Beaumont in the same measure or degree as to Fletcher in his later plays[1]. In *The Faithful Shepherdess*

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that I found in Coleridge's *Remains* (vol. ii. p. 308) the remark that 'it is a real trial of charity to read this scene with tolerable temper towards Fletcher. So very slavish—so reptile—are the feelings and sentiments represented as duties. And yet remember he was a bishop's son, and the duty to God was the supposed basis.' Elsewhere (p. 304) Coleridge describes Beaumont and Fletcher as 'high-flying, passive-obedience Tories.'

[1] See the criticisms as to the joint plays, which will I think on the whole justify this statement. *A King and No King* can hardly be excepted from

Fletcher indulges in an utterly artificial fancy of a love purged from all earthly elements; in most of the other plays—*Philaster* being perhaps the most notable exception—these earthly elements absorb the passion of which the plays of these poets are full. As in the plays of Lope de Vega, so in those of the English dramatists, the passion of love is the unchaining of the real nature of their own men and women, and in most cases the latter fly readily to their mates[1]. This moral grossness is a far more grievous self-prostration than the indecency of diction for which it is so easy to find a hundred excuses. The homage paid to woman's virtue in these plays is formal; the view of life actually advanced is no other than that intrigue is a game sometimes of chance, sometimes of skill, in which it is merely a question of time for the weaker player when she will succumb.

Their unconsciousness of these defects.

Such views of life are presented as a matter of course, without any affectation of frankness or cynicism, but also without any appearance of hesitation. In all matters related to morality, whether political or social, these dramatists seem to be unvexed by doubts or difficulties; and there are comparatively few traces to be found in them of anger or bitterness against those who, unlike themselves, take rigid views of the conditions and duties of existence. It has probably surprised many readers of Beaumont and Fletcher to find that their references to Puritan opinions and ways of life are neither many nor striking. They probably came into little personal contact with Puritan society; nor do they appear to have troubled themselves much concerning it[2].

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the indictment; *The Maid's Tragedy* I am disposed in this respect to judge differently.

[1] This was more tersely than politely expressed by an early critic (Flecknoe, in his *Discourse of the English Stage*, 1660 *c.*), who says that Beaumont and Fletcher 'seldom represent an honourable woman, without somewhat of Dol Common in her.'—I have not thought it necessary to enter into the question of choice of subjects, with regard to which Mr. Swinburne has confronted the insinuations of Coleridge by statistics of his own. It cannot be seriously maintained that Beaumont and Fletcher in this respect rose above the preferences of their age.

[2] References to the Puritans, however, are not altogether absent from

Their literary qualities as dramatists. Their facility in construction.

If from features in the works of these poets which exhibit the moral signature of their times, we pass to those dramatic and literary qualities which distinguish them among their fellows, the following seem to claim more especial notice. Beaumont and Fletcher construct with great lightness, and occasionally with admirable skill. Nearly all their plays, as has already been observed, are each formed out of two plots—a practice with which we are already familiar from Shakspere, but which in Beaumont and Fletcher almost wears the aspect of an acknowledged principle of construction[1]. It is to be regretted that they should have thus stereotyped a practice which even in Fletcher's hands proved itself prone to lead to looseness of texture and to dissipation of interest[2]. On the other hand, it may be doubted whether any other writer has ever shown greater skill in discerning the dramatic elements in works of narrative fiction and using them in the construction of dramatic plots ; in this respect Beaumont and Fletcher appear to me unsurpassed even by Shakspere, if indeed they do not excel him in the freedom and lightness of their adaptive workmanship. Occasionally the tact is little short of wonderful with which they succeed in forming a symmetrical and effective play out of the most heterogeneous materials[3].

Their range of characters.

In characterisation Beaumont and Fletcher are extremely felicitous within a limited range. Certain types of character, such as the tyrant and the blunt outspoken old soldier, constantly recur in their serious dramas. No species of character was a greater favourite with them—more especially perhaps while their literary partnership still endured—than the devoted maiden—the Viola whose name they cannot be said to have misused[4] ; and it was here that they availed themselves so largely of a device which in their age was by no

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Fletcher's plays. I have noted such in *Women Pleased; The Woman's Prize ; The Chances.*

[1] Dryden, in his Preface to his and Lee's *Œdipus* (1679), speaks of the 'under-plots of second persons' as an imperious necessity of the modern stage, and regrets that it should be thought impossible to return to the simple 'ancient method.' (See *Works*, vol. vi.)

[2] See e. g. *The Little French Lawyer.*

[3] See especially *The Custom of the Country.*

[4] See *The Coxcomb.*

means confined to the stage. It seems not to have been unusual then for love-sick ladies in pages' attire to accompany their lovers on their walks abroad; and the frequent repetition of this device in Beaumont and Fletcher might almost be called conventional. Opportunities were thus multiplied for heightening by contrast the softness of the female character which they knew so well how to pourtray. In comic characterisation Fletcher covers a relatively wide range, and he is equally successful in drawing characters of a high comedy and of a low comedy type. The former he more especially affects, though his creations of this class cannot be said always to prove palatable to our taste or feeling[1]; but in low and farcical comedy too he must be allowed to have invented some comic figures of indisputable originality[2]. The two writers' burlesque of an antiquated species of drama is of its kind admirable, and Beaumont must be credited with a full share of its fun—generally wholesome if not altogether original[3].

Their ease and grace of diction.

But it is less in construction and characterisation than in diction that we have to seek for Beaumont and Fletcher's most distinctive excellences. Here their poetic gifts were no doubt enhanced by the tact of which their training and experience made them masters, and which their observation and criticism of one another had no doubt helped to form. Thus they acquired what is well ascribed to Fletcher in a Prologue to *The Chances*, the art of

'sweet expression, quick conceit,
Familiar language, fashion'd to the weight
Of those that speak it:'—

Their pathos.

and in outward form became attractive in a degree hardly equalled by any other of our dramatists. If they are wanting in tragic elevation, they are masters of tragic pathos[4].

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[1] See e. g. Mirabel in *The Wild-Goose-Chase.*

[2] *The Humorous Lieutenant* is a *Captain Sparento* of a quite new kind; and *The Spanish Curate* is an equally fresh type.

[3] *The Knight of the Burning Pestle.*

[4] 'In easy dialogue is Fletcher's praise;
He moved the mind, but had not power to raise.'
Dryden to Congreve (on *The Double Dealer*).

In pathetic passages they display a natural grace and a sweetness which rarely cloys, and which they seem to have had thoroughly at command. Nothing short of true poetic feeling and some insight into that well of true sentiment, woman's heart, could have prompted the beautiful passages, making appeal to almost every tender feeling of the human heart, with which the works of these dramatists overflow.

Their grace and felicity of style.

In general they are free from any tendency to bombast or rant. Although their personages and situations are at times extravagantly conceived, in diction they rarely pass beyond the limits of the appropriate[1], and it is against their nature to fall into the excesses of style which they had ridiculed together with other absurdities in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*. The singular felicity of their style is equally apparent in many of the lyrics scattered through their dramas, and in the dialogue, which though nowhere containing passages of deep wisdom graven in undying verse like Shakspere's, is brilliant with beauties of expression dropped as it were unconsciously, 'like the lazy minutes, which past once are forgotten[2].'

Fletcher's versification.

The beauty of Beaumont and Fletcher's diction is inseparably married to that of their versification. It may be regarded as established that Fletcher's versification has characteristics of its own wholly distinct from Beaumont's, modelled on Shakspere's before it had passed the normal period, as well as from that of Massinger, whose hand is recognisable in so many of the plays noticed in this chapter. Of the peculiarities which on this head distinguish Fletcher among our dramatists his frequent use of feminine endings is the most noticeable. In his plays, the proportion of lines ending with one or even two unaccented syllables is much larger than in those of any other Elisabethan dramatist,—even than in those of Massinger. In the line itself the pause is often allowed to rest on an unaccented instead of on an accented syllable. Again, he frequently breaks up the iambic feet of his lines into tribrachs, or in other words uses three-syllable instead of two-syllable feet. Lastly, he prefers what are called 'stopped' lines, i.e. lines of which the end coincides with a break or pause in the grammatical construction. In this respect Massinger differs from Fletcher to such an extent as to render it as a rule easy to distinguish between them as verse-writers. The result, so far as Fletcher is concerned, is that his blank-verse possesses a character of its own unmistakeable in a sense in which this epithet cannot be applied to that of any other among Shakspere's contemporaries. It sacrifices firmness for the sake of a soft—what may be truly described as an insinuating—sweetness. The risk is run of a monotonous effect resulting from the frequent recurrence of the feminine endings, more especially at the end of 'stopped' lines, while an effeminate impression, such as Aristophanes ridiculed in Euripides, is conveyed by the broken-up feet. To the former objection Fletcher's verse must, I think, be allowed to be open; but the breaking-up of the metre his poetic taste prevents him from carrying so far that it becomes a serious danger to the effect of his verse[1]. Yet, altogether, it is difficult to read Fletcher without feeling that his versification is, so to speak, *transnormal*. Thus the outward form of his writing, like much in the spirit and contents of his and Beaumont's plays, reminds us how near at hand is the close of that Elisabethan drama of which these two writers are among the most brilliant ornaments, but whose course they did little to elevate and whose decay they did little to prevent.

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[1] There is some bombast in *A Wife for a Month*; and perhaps here and there in other plays, though I have no note of it.

[2] *The Custom of the Country* (act iii. sc. 2).

Beaumont and Fletcher

True greatness, whether in a poet, in a statesman, or in a man of science, consists in being above or before the age, and thus taking rank among its teachers. No greatness of this kind is recognisable in the monuments which remain to us of the dramatic genius of Beaumont and Fletcher. The littleness of their age, not its better aspirations, reflects itself in their plays. It was an age of tyrants and their favourites; of evil counsellors and evil counsels; of pandars and minions; of cloaked vices and bedizened grossness; of blatant theories and systems; of the decay of principles and beliefs. Its portraiture of course needs the addition of many other features besides these; but it cannot be denied that they are prominent among the signs of the times in and for which Beaumont and Fletcher wrote. The best safeguard of a national life, domestic virtue, and the most invigorating element in national feeling, a healthy national self-confidence, were endangered in many spheres of English society by the degeneracy and degradation to be found at its centre, to which public attention most eagerly directed itself. The rule of statesmen was succeeded by the sway of adventurers; and Court intrigues too often usurped the place of national endeavour. Beaumont and Fletcher breathed a corrupt atmosphere, without, so far as we can see, aspiring after rarer and purer air. The national history was to them a source neither of indignant contrast nor of cheering consolation; and of the book of nature they were contented to turn but a few leaves. They were moved by no supreme force of genius or of character to go deeper or soar higher than the age demanded; they neither inherited the divining-rod of Shakspere nor laboured with infinite diligence like Ben Jonson; their pathos is incidental rather than essential to their work, though they could move its spring at their wish, and their humour fails to penetrate very far beneath the surface. Their plays will never cease to dazzle and to delight, even though denied that representation on the stage which in many instances could not fail to attest their almost unparalleled theatrical effectiveness; but it may be questioned whether any one drama of theirs is capable of fully satisfying the mind which it stimulates into attention, or of thoroughly harmonising the feelings which it stirs into tumult. Nearly always

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[1] Such a passage as this may be taken as an extreme instance of Fletcher's manner,—and how charming it is in its licence!

'How sweet these solitary places are! how wantonly
The wind blows through the leaves, and courts and plays with 'em.'
(*The Pilgrim*, act v. sc. 4.)

The trisyllabic endings were perhaps a freedom originally borrowed from Ariosto, who wrote whole comedies in *endecasillabi sdruccioli* (hendecasyllables which slip along, *i. e.* end with a dactyl). Cf. Klein, act iv. sc. 305.

not above their age.

brilliant, at times irresistibly attractive, the plays of Fletcher and his associate will never cease to be admired where they are read; but they are unlikely at any time to achieve the one kind of success to which they never seem to have attained, and to take deep root in the national heart.

APPENDIX

Pages 31–32 (Shakspere's *Sonnets*).

I have not spoken very confidently on the question (into which I could not enter at length) as to the identity of the youth to whom the earlier of the *Sonnets* were addressed. But I should probably have expressed myself more doubtfully, though still as unconverted from my view, had Mr. Sidney Lee's admirable biography of Shakspere, in vol. li of the *Dictionary*, been published in time to be used by me in revising this chapter. Mr. Lee, who not long since held that the youth addressed by Shakspere was doubtless Pembroke, and the dark lady probably Mary Fitton (see his notice of Pembroke in vol. xxvi), has now come to consider both hypotheses inadmissible, and identifies the young man with Southampton. He has more fully developed the grounds of his present opinion in a paper in the April number of *The Cornhill Magazine* (1898), which reaches me at the last moment; and there is an early prospect of a still more complete statement by Mr. Lee on the subject in connexion with a biography of Southampton, to which we are all looking forward. Moreover, I understand that Mr. Lee is about to re-issue his Shakspere article in the *Dictionary* as an independent volume, and that he will there supply a fuller statement of his views concerning the *Sonnets*.

As for Mary Fitton, whom there is not a particle of evidence in the family letters (or out of them) to connect with Shakspere, it is certain, from the evidence of the family portraits at Arbury, that her appearance in no wise corresponded to that of the lady of the *Sonnets*. She was fair, not 'dun' complexioned, her hair was brown, not 'black wires,' and her eyes were grey, not 'raven-black.' See the charming volume, *Gossip from a Muniment Room, being Passages in the Lives of Anne and Mary Fytton*, 1574 to 1618, published by Lady Newdigate-Newdegate (1897), since my note had gone to press.

Page 206 (Authorship of *Henry VIII*).

The statement is no doubt quite correct that the number of 'unstopped' lines in *Henry VIII* is so great as to justify the conclusion that if this play is by Shakspere, it is one of his latest, though not necessarily quite the latest, of his plays. At the same time it should have been pointed out that the proportion of unstopped lines in the parts of *Henry VIII* assigned by Spedding to Shakspere is considerably greater than that in the parts assigned by him to Fletcher; viz. in the former case 1 out of 2·03, in the latter 1 out of 3·79. These proportions would fit in well with the hypothesis which divides the play mainly between Fletcher and Massinger.

END OF VOL. II.

ERRATA

p. 13, note 4. l. 5 from bottom : for *Topography* read *Typography.*

p. 29, l. 11 from top and note : *for* Condall *read* Condell.

p. 52, l. 20 and margin : for (*d*) read (*e*).

p. 138, line 11 from top : *for* Amiator *read* Amintor.

p. 140, l. 1 : *for* Eades *read* Eedes.

p. 181, line 18 from top : for *Love* read *Law.*

p. 219, line 4 from top : *for* Houghton *read* Haughton.

p. 231, note 3, line 6 from bottom : *for* 105 *read* 205.

p. 356, note 1, l. 12 from bottom : *for* Pary *read* Pavy.

p. 618, line 7 from top : *for* 1604 *read* 1615.

p. 645, l. 9 : *for* correctly adjusted, *read* correctly, adjusted.

p. 647, note 3, l. 3 from bottom : *for* those *read* these.

p. 683, note 2, line 13 from bottom : *for* Tickner *read* Ticknor.

p. 697, note 2, line 4 from bottom, *for* Coleman *read* Colman.

p. 713, margin : for *or authors* read *or other authors.*

p. 742, line 8 from bottom : for *The Right Woman* read *A Right Woman.*

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